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**University
of Glasgow**

**Towards Leading Effective Secondary Schools in Abu
Dhabi, UAE: Stakeholders' Perceptions**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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ABSTRACT

The modern and post-modern world has tried to attend to the factors that lead to effective schooling. The School Effectiveness (SE) movement investigates the characteristics of effective schools and how these characteristics may lead to improved pupil achievement. This study explores the characteristics of effective secondary schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) context, together with the effectiveness of their leaders from the perspective of these schools' stakeholders, namely principals, teachers, students and parents. In particular, the main aims of the study are first to identify the key factors that contribute to effective schools in UAE secondary education and second to outline the strategies for improving schools and school leadership professional development requirements.

The study employs a mixed-methods, sequential, exploratory strategy to understand the perceptions of UAE key education stakeholders. Firstly, 46 principals, 138 teachers, 136 parents and 142 pupils filled in questionnaires and then, for added validity and reliability, ten school principals were also interviewed in the second part of the study.

What is striking about the study's findings is that the two instruments – the survey and the interview – did not, in most cases, lead to the same homogeneous results, as the results deduced from the questionnaire did not totally corroborate those realised from the interviews.

Key education stakeholders in the UAE proposed three strategies – vision, teamwork and school climate – in order to improve SE in Abu Dhabi. Induction leadership programmes, internal self-evaluation and external evaluation are not considered by the majority of principals and their subordinates to be salient and efficient strategies for improving schools. This is due, presumably, to the lack of logistical procedures and evaluation organisms in place through which schools can internally gauge their degree of effectiveness against lucid standards, indicators and benchmarks.

Effective school leadership was largely associated with three common prerequisites – experience, ethics and management competence – with a predominant ethical and civic style centred around the preservation of national identity, Islamic values and an Arabic cultural context.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the soul of our beloved father, the unmatched leader, His Highness Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, who founded and ruled our country and contributed towards disseminating peace and prosperity inside the UAE and elsewhere in the international arena. To his noble sons who continue to steer the ship of this nation with wisdom and dexterity. The writing of this thesis has been one of the most significant academic challenges I have ever had to face. As a young girl growing up in a conservative society, I had the opportunity to graduate from the UAE University with distinction, get my Master's degree and then apply for higher doctoral studies at the University of Glasgow, UK.

Without the support, patience and guidance of the following people, this study would not have been completed. It is to them that I owe my deepest gratitude. First and foremost, a debt of gratitude to my husband Nasser for his love, unwavering support and wise counsel. My sincere thanks and gratitude are extended too to my father, mother, brothers and sisters who have been a continuous source of motivation and inspiration throughout the study. My heartfelt thanks also go out to my kids for their support and their patience because of my being away from their everyday life most of the time.

I cannot express the level of gratitude I feel for Dr. Mugheer Al Khaili for the continued support he offered to me and my fellow students as the Director General of Abu Dhabi Education Council. I would personally like to thank him for his sincerity, dedication and the commitment he displayed in guiding us all through our journey. He took the time and made the effort to facilitate our learning and enabled all his students to overcome any obstacles they faced. He provided us with the tools we needed to fulfil our hopes, dreams and ambitions and gave advice on how we could effectively serve our homeland.

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Also, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the principals, teachers, parents and students in Abu Dhabi secondary schools who participated in this research project with interest and enthusiasm; without this I would not have been able to complete my research.

Finally, I would like to thank all my colleagues and dear friends who, directly or indirectly, have lent a hand in this venture.

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The completion of this thesis forms the next chapter of my commitment to lifelong learning and, whilst the journey through the course of this PhD programme has been challenging at times, the rewards are immeasurable. Throughout this process I have gained a great deal of knowledge, and learnt a lot, all of which will help me both personally and professionally for the rest of my life.

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I would like also to thank Dr. Britton for the substantial recommendations he made in respect of my research and for sharing the wealth of his knowledge and experience.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature _____

Nafila Mahdi Al Ahbabi

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ABBREVIATIONS

UAE	United Arab Emirates
ADEC	Abu Dhabi Education Council
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
ES	Effective School
ICSEI	International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement
ISERP	International School Effectiveness Research Project
KHDA	Knowledge and Human Development Authority
MOCA	Ministry of Cabinet Affairs
MOE	Ministry of Education
NQA	National Qualifications Authority
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education in the UK
PPP	Public Private Partnership
SE	School Effectiveness
SER	School Effectiveness Research
SI	School Improvement

CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

Modern governments are aware of the important role their education systems play in developing their societies and meeting the complex challenges of the twenty-first century. As such, and as a key component of a society's government, the ongoing development and advancement of efficient educational systems is deemed essential by modern governments. It seems reasonable to state that the place where such improvements are most important is at the school level, since: (a) education is the means by which the newest generation of a society is equipped with the skills necessary for adult life; (b) the various requirements and expectations of parents, employers and higher education institutions are accommodated; and (c) it is here that essential knowledge is first passed on.

In order to achieve the strategic goals of the formal education system, public schools receive various forms of financial, legislative and technological support from government and associated agencies. For this purpose, schools are not only expected to focus on raising student achievement and managing change, as noted by Reynolds et al. (2001), but they should also be effective in instilling meaningful skills, appropriate knowledge and positive attitudes and values equally in all learners. However, "without effective leadership of schools it is virtually impossible to have effective schools", as the UAE Minister of Education stated for the Gulf News (El-Shammaa, 2008). There are numerous reasons why schools may perform their roles inadequately, which may be related directly to ineffective practices or inappropriate education management, or to other factors. This general view seems to be universal and secondary schools in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are no exception.

What then makes a school effective? What are the characteristics of effective schools? What are the qualities, capabilities and standards by which effective school leadership can be judged? It is believed that there are certain characteristics of individual schools that make them more effective in carrying out educational goals (Stoll, 1994:129). However, school effectiveness (SE) has been defined in different ways (Potter and Powell, 1992; Gray et al., 1996; Sammons et al., 1997) indicating, for example, that "effective schooling can satisfy the demands of parents and students and meet measurable standards such as examination results". From a more global perspective, Whitaker (1994:89) stresses that an effective school is committed to the significant continual development and improvement of

all its members. Factors at the classroom level, school level and community level (the context) should also be taken into account (Scheerens & Creemers, 1989) when considering the role and nature of effective schools.

School leadership is considered a core element of any educational change and improvement process due to the fact that it plays a central role in the achievement of school academic and social goals (Bredeson, 1996; Davis et al., 2005; Bush, 2008; Huber and Muijs, 2010; Pont et al., 2011). The UAE Minister of Education has emphasised that school leaders are required to demonstrate proficiency in the administrative and instructional use of technology as well as in communication skills so that they can meet the basic requirements of effective leadership (El-Shammaa, 2008). For this reason, leaders of effective schools should meet greater challenges and pressures than those of less effective schools, including both responding to government demand for a steady growth in learning attainment and undertaking daily managerial tasks (Bush and Chew, 1999). This view is consistent with, and supported by, research which has shown that effective schools are influenced by school leadership practices (Reynolds et al., 1996; Sammons et al., 1995; Hallinger and Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 1999; Day et al., 2000; Marzano et al., 2005; Leithwood et al., 2006).

Generally speaking, it is believed that “the successful characteristics (of effective school leadership)...[are] associated with high levels of student achievement” (Portin et al., 2003:8). However, linking the effectiveness of a school with that of its leader is more complex than simply listing and comparing the characteristics of both to determine their relevance. It is this researcher’s view that effective school leadership, as an agent of change, and effective schools, as a locus for change, are mutually beneficial in that the former contributes significantly to the creation of the latter and the latter provides an appropriate environment for the former to be effective.

Considering SE or school quality on the one hand and the quality of leadership on the other, it might be misleading to use student outcomes as the sole determining factor in a systematic evaluation of the UAE schooling system. This being so, the architecture of the UAE educational context is highly complex, taking into consideration the multinational and multicultural nature of the school community. In addition to the fact that limited research has been conducted in relation to secondary education in the UAE, the questions raised by this study arise from the international literature and the factors purported to

describe effective schools. By contrasting and comparing the characteristics of effective schools, school quality, improving schools, excellent schools and successful schools in the international context with those of their counterparts in the regional and local context, this study offers a deeper understanding of the nature of SE and underpins the importance of considering these contexts when investigating effective schools. A similar comparison can be made between the international and local contexts regarding the effectiveness of school leadership.

1.2 Motivation for the Study

The researcher's motivation and rationale for this study stem from a sense of dissatisfaction with current trends in practice and a desire to change 'from good to better'. This dissatisfaction stems from several sources: (1) the current state of the UAE education system (see Chapter Two, 2.10); (2) the new education policy initiatives in the UAE – 'Educational Reform in the UAE' (see Chapter Two, 2.11); (3) the need for a conceptualisation of effective schools and leadership based on, and relevant to, the UAE context (see Chapter Four, 4.13); and (4) personal experience.

In terms of personal experience, the researcher has worked at the Ministry of Education and the Abu Dhabi Education Council for over 17 years. For the first five years of her career, she worked within the field of teaching, before becoming an administrator in the Education Department. As such, the researcher has experienced a very broad range of schooling issues, from the perspective of the school and classroom environment through to an administrative perspective.

Within this broad range of experience, the researcher identifies effective schooling and leadership as the greatest challenge. In particular, although schools are provided with modern human and physical resources in an effort to achieve the officially desired objectives, the researcher is disturbed by the public's perception and by the frequency of inspection reports that highlight various dysfunctions and areas of under-performance in many schools, namely ineffective schools and weak leadership.

During the researcher's many years of working in a training and development centre in the Department of Education (and within the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) specifically), she was involved in training various cadres of education staff. One of the

main tasks of the Department of Education is to collect feedback from the targeted trainees after completion of their training courses, to gain insight in relation to the viability and advantages of these training programmes to schools. Respondents reported that the training activities in place did not contribute significantly to their professional and personal development and did not satisfy the overall needs of school leaders. These in-service programmes are not complemented by local postgraduate degrees in educational administration, which might be seen as a further weakness.

The researcher became convinced that one of the major causes of the apparent failure of the education system relates to the application of packaged, ready-to-use solutions in addition to the unmodified transfer and projection of experiences from developed countries onto the local educational context. No comprehensive analysis of training needs had ever been carried out, with the result that course content was mostly adopted from elsewhere; as such, it did not reflect the real situation and specific contexts experienced by school principals and teachers.

1.3 Research Context

A brief outline of the education system in the UAE offers a greater understanding of the context of the current research. Since its inception, successive governments of the UAE have been interested in employing the revenue of the oil industry to improve the education sector, especially since the UAE per capita income is seventh-highest in the world (Congress, 2007). The continuous high demand for an educated workforce in the UAE, together with the growth of its population, has created a demand for improved education standards.

In the UAE, public schools, which are free of charge for all national citizens, consist of primary schools, middle schools and high schools, with Arabic being the medium of instruction. Education at primary and secondary level is universal and compulsory up to grade 9. This takes place in a four-tier process over 14 years: four and five year-olds attend kindergarten, six to 11 year-olds attend primary school, the preparatory stage caters for children aged 12 to 14 years, and 15 to 18 year-olds attend secondary schools. In grade 11, the students can choose between science and arts pathways. Technical education comprises three main streams: technical, agricultural and commercial. At the end of the general and technical secondary stages, students receive the secondary school leaving certificate or the

technical secondary diploma after passing the general examination. From 2010/2011 onwards, the organisation of the school year for government schools changed from two semesters to three terms, comprising a total of 180 school days.

The Emiratisation of teaching staff in government schools is scheduled to reach 90 per cent by 2020, in order to ensure that the Islamic principles and traditions of the UAE are maintained (UAE Interact, 2012). Furthermore, the current reforms being undertaken in the education sector take up approximately 25 per cent of the UAE's national budget. By 2020, 90 per cent of employees in this sector are expected to be of UAE citizenship for the purpose of maintaining and preserving the local culture (Congress, 2007).

Over 40 per cent of pupils in the UAE attend private schools. Due to the large number of immigrants to the country, expatriate pupils attend private schools which offer different curricula mediated by a language consistent with their individual nationality, all governed by guidelines set out by the Ministry of Education (UAE Interact, 2012). A Cabinet decision excluding expatriate students from government schools, which commenced in the academic year 2006/2007, requires that admission for expatriate students is based on merit, and fees are levied.

Regional support centres, as opposed to departments of education, work closely with the Ministry of Education in formulating the UAE's education plans within the framework of the wider UAE general education policy (MOE, 2007). The body governing these centres in the Abu Dhabi region is the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC), which was established in 2005 by UAE President H.H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan as an independent corporate body. The aim of ADEC is to assist UAE education in becoming a world-class system that qualifies and equips the UAE people with appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes to be competitive in the international labour market (ADEC, Website). It is clear that, in the absence of scientific and systematic approaches to improving the quality of educational leadership and provision, these educational goals will not be achieved in the near future.

Due to the paucity of research on SE in the UAE, the current research focuses on the effectiveness levels of public secondary schools in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE, where three education zones are covered, namely the Abu Dhabi Education Zone, the Al Ain Education Zone and the Western Region Education Zone. These education zones are

controlled and managed by ADEC (ADEC, 2010). Abu Dhabi's public schools are structured into Model schools, Al-Ghad schools, Public Private Partnership (PPP) schools, regular government schools and private schools (ADEC, 2010). There are 685 public schools in the UAE (96 of which are secondary schools), serving approximately 27,000 students (MOE, 2010/2011). In an attempt to analyse and unpack the internal fabric of the effectiveness of these secondary schools, the present study focuses on the 30 secondary schools located in Abu Dhabi. This region was selected because, compared to the other six Emirates, Abu Dhabi has the 'lion's share' in terms of the total number of secondary schools in the UAE (MOE, 2010/2011). This research aims to explore the perceptions of stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and students) regarding the level and quality of SE and the assessment of school leadership effectiveness in these 30 national secondary schools.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Since the independence of the UAE in 1971, the Ministry of Education has centrally controlled the education system. A huge increase in the number of students during the last two decades has led to a significant shift in the public management of education (Al-Etiha, 2005). According to the official UAE Newspaper (Al-Etiha, 2005), the UAE school system needed radical reform. Following this, large-scale developments started to be introduced into the country's education system through a national reform programme. The programme has worked on formulating a new educational policy that:

1. Emphasises the role of active students in a modern knowledge society
2. Mobilises social and political support for investment in education
3. Has internationally benchmarked performance expectations for all educational levels
4. Sets out a national ten-year plan to bring schools up to international standards
5. Modifies educational management by establishing regional support centres instead of departments of education
6. Provides the appropriate resources and support to achieve the required adjustments (Macpherson et al., 2007).

Despite considerable efforts to reform the quality of education, the expected outcomes of public schooling and the national education goals have not yet reached the UAE government's expectations (Khaleej Times, 2010; Cooper et al, 2015). To quote an article published in the Arab Knowledge Report 2010/2011, Sultan Lootah, Managing Director of the Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation, acknowledges the fact that "education has flourished in developed countries, but in the Arab world there is still a need to work hard on improving the quality of education". This is confirmed also by conclusive evidence taken from UAE statistics that the number of students 'qualified' for admission to higher education is currently only 3 per cent of the total number of students graduating from high schools (Khaleej Times, 2010). The application of effective schooling models is still limited and may not be comparable to similar developments in other countries (Ibrahim and Al Taneiji, 2013).

In the Ministry of Education's 'School Evaluation and Accreditation' 2011-2012 report (Nazzal, 2013), the Ministry postulates in their evaluated schools' results that the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms, along with leadership, are among the factors that need improvement in schools falling under their control. The report addresses 97 public and 21 private schools in the education zones of Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah, Umm Al Quwain and Dubai. The evaluation programme of UAE schools has focused on six areas: leadership, the school as a community, approach to student learning, classroom environment, students' personal development and student progress.

However, the report indicated that most teachers in the evaluated schools are reticent in implementing modern teaching methods. Rather than enhancing communicative, interactive and cooperative modes of instruction, rote learning and outmoded teaching methods are the common currency of classroom pedagogy. Such resistance to the wave of reform has also been documented elsewhere by Troudi and Alwan (2010) and Ibrahim et al. (2013). Further, the report indicated that UAE school leadership requires improvement as only one third of the schools are ranked 'highly effective' in this area, which is significantly lower than the 'highly effective' average among public schools across all other focus areas. The results of this report found that leadership often depends on an individual principal, with the concept of a whole school management board being uncommon, and this is something that might raise doubts as to the validity and reliability of the claimed high levels of effectiveness of the evaluated schools.

Based on the results of this evaluative public programme, the Minister of Education has made it clear that the quality of teaching, learning and school leadership are among the factors requiring improvement in public schools in the UAE (Nazzal, 2013). For unknown reasons, the Abu Dhabi zone was not covered by this programme, and this provides additional motivation for investigating SE in this particular region.

Although there is theoretical recognition of the importance of developing schooling and implementing high standards for school leadership in the UAE by the introduction of effective schooling models, the current situation remains below expectations and may not be comparable to similar developments in other countries (Ibrahim and Al Taneiji, 2013). Internationally, research on the characteristics of SE has drawn upon the perceptions of key stakeholders such as teachers (Davies and Ellison, 1997; Townsend, 1997a; Yiasemis, 1999; Kyriakides and Campbell, 2003; Ghani et al., 2011), pupils (Benjamin and Hollings, 1995; Karatzias et al., 2001; Nockles, 2009), and pupils, parents and teachers (MacBeath, 1995; SOEID, 2010; Odhiambo and Hii, 2012).

Effective school leadership styles and characteristics have also been a recent focus on the part of researchers, as leaders are considered to be responsible for the improvement of schools (Sammons et al., 1997; Busher et al., 2000; Robinson et al., 2008).

According to Ibrahim and Al Taneiji (2013), there is a scarcity of research on SE in the Arab world, notably with respect to effective principal leadership characteristics in the Arab Gulf region. Possibly it could be argued that the Ministry of Education in the UAE is still very inexperienced when it comes to overseeing effective education management. It could also be argued that there is a shortage of national expertise or effective education reform movements through which recent trends in research and the development of human and physical resources that favour effective schools can be deployed. The solution espoused by Lootah is to link theory to practice, that is “to transfer the successful experiences on education in the world to the Arab countries”, in that “it is important to let people participate in issues and listening to their suggestions that would help cover the knowledge gap in the Arab region” (Gulf News, 2012:3). In the absence of scientific and systematic approaches to improving the quality of educational leadership within the appropriate climate for learning and schooling processes, these educational goals will not be achieved in the near future.

Local scientific research on effective schooling processes would be highly valuable in improving the UAE education system, as the achievement of national strategic educational goals will not be achieved solely by providing high quality resources and state-of-the-art technologies. The scarcity of relevant research in the UAE may be attributed to the lack of a participatory approach that involves teachers, students and parents in the process of assessing the development, improvement and promotion of schools to make them more effective. This is consistent with Samoff (1999:253) who argues that “the voices of teachers, students, and parents can scarcely be heard”, and with Levin and Lockheed (1991) who state that research in developing countries faces many constraints, including the disappearance of teachers’ and parents’ voices in developing school improvements.

In light of this discussion, the focus of this research stems from two conflicting arguments which have taken place in the UAE recently. The first supports the idea that most UAE schools are effective due to the fact that they are provided with modern human and physical resources, regardless of the educational outcomes of these schools. The other argument suggests that no one can judge for sure if schools in the UAE are effective. The first view tends to compare local schools to others in developing countries, stressing the comparatively generous funds they receive from the UAE government. The latter view believes that SE is governed by the achievement of educational strategic goals, the availability of effective leaders and scientific evidence of their effectiveness. Generally speaking, the problem of this research stems from the scarcity of research on SE and leadership quality in UAE schools, together with the poor outcomes of students, especially in the basic subjects, according to national standardised measures (OECD, 2010).

The conclusion referred to earlier concerning the effectiveness of the management of public schooling may be due to the apparent shortage of local scientific research conducted at the national level. Such research is important when it comes to formulating strategic plans for curriculum mapping management, schooling and the development of educational policy (Congress, 2007). For instance, the UAE University, which was established in 1976, has not yet been able to conduct longitudinal research on either the development of education or effective schooling, or on leading the government’s efforts in this regard (Congress, 2007).

Therefore, the current study attempts to shed light on the effectiveness of secondary schools and leader effectiveness in the UAE using the perspective of school stakeholders, especially current principals, teachers, students and parents.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

This study provides a high level overview of the global literature on SE and school leadership, and applies this theoretical and research-led knowledge to a specific context. In doing so, it explores the characteristics of effective secondary schools in the UAE context, together with the effectiveness of their leaders from the perspective of their stakeholders, namely principals, teachers, students and parents. In particular, the main aim of the study is to identify the key factors that contribute to effective schools in UAE secondary education. In addition, it aims to outline strategies for improving schools and school leadership professional development requirements.

These factors and strategies will be predicated on the perceptions of all stakeholders: the teachers, the school principals and their deputies, and the parents and pupils of each sample school. A questionnaire and one-to-one interviews with the interested parties was used to gather evidence in this regard.

1.6 Questions of the Study

In order to achieve the aim of this study, the following overarching questions are addressed:

High-level research questions:

1. Are current definitions and understandings of school effectiveness (SE) and leadership self-evident or problematic?
2. What are the characteristics of effective schools and effective leadership? How are they perceived by practitioners?
3. What strategies should be adopted in order to improve school effectiveness (SE) and leadership effectiveness in the UAE?

These high-level questions are then broken down into a number of context-specific sub-questions which provided the focus for the gathering of quantitative and qualitative evidence.

- a. What is the meaning of school effectiveness and what is an effective school according to the opinions of each stakeholder (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?
- b. What are the characteristics that contribute to effective schools as perceived by stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?
- c. Are there any characteristics of effective schools that are more important for school effectiveness than others according to the opinions of each stakeholder and, if so, why?
- d. What are the characteristics of secondary school leadership that can be associated with effective schools as perceived by stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?
- e. Are there any characteristics of effective leadership that are more important for school effectiveness than others according to the opinions of each stakeholder and, if so, why?
- f. What are the required strategies and developments for secondary schools and school leadership to become more effective in the UAE?

1.7 Methodological Framework

This study has employed a pragmatic philosophy and methodology to guide its procedures. For the pragmatists, the researcher is free to choose methods and techniques that best meet their needs (Creswell, 2007:19). In other words, “pragmatic researchers consider the research questions to be more important than either the method they use or the paradigm that underlies the method” (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003:21).

This research is founded on the constructivist paradigm which is based on a particular pattern or set of assumptions concerning reality (ontology). The nature of the research questions necessitates using the method of knowing reality (the knower and the known). That is, to understand the phenomenon well, the researcher needs to closely interact with the participants “through interviews, exploratory survey of the views and perceptions of

the participants, reviews of what occurs in the natural setting (epistemology) and particular ways of knowing about reality (methodology)” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Considering the aims of the research, the study has adopted a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative approaches to answer the research questions. This research methodology is increasingly recognised as valuable in educational and social research because using both quantitative and qualitative approaches can capitalise on the respective strengths of each (Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007). For example, quantitative research counts occurrences (e.g. it estimates prevalence, frequency, magnitude, incidence, etc.), while qualitative research describes the complexity, breadth, or range of occurrences or phenomena. Further, while quantitative research seeks to statistically test hypotheses, qualitative research seeks to generate hypotheses about a phenomenon, its precursors and its consequences. Quantitative research is performed in randomised or non-randomised experimental and natural settings and generates numerical data through standardised processes and instruments with predetermined response categories. Qualitative research tends to occur mainly in natural (rather than experimental) settings, and produces text-based data through often open-ended discussions and observations. Combining the quantitative and qualitative components of a larger study can achieve various aims, including the corroboration and triangulation of findings, the generation of more complete data and using the results from each method to enhance insights attained with the other method (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

The study involved 30 public secondary schools, representing 65 per cent of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi schools and 28 per cent of the 108 secondary schools in the UAE (see Chapter Two, Table 2.1). The sample of this study consists of 20 participants from each school, namely the principal and vice-principal, six teachers, six students and six parents. A detailed research methodology, and detailed methods of data collection and analysis techniques, will be presented in Chapter Five.

1.8 Contribution of this Research

This research has been conducted at a time when several developments in UAE education policy and further reforms are planned by the Ministry of Education along with other regional educational councils (Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah). The results of this research will significantly assist policy makers and decision makers in setting out more appropriate

strategic views for the near and far future in education in the UAE. In other words, the findings of this research will provide the central government of the UAE with practical reform procedures, and a deeper understanding of the current nature of their secondary schools, so that they can successfully plan for these schools to be effective and world-class, as hoped. The research will also enable the Ministry of Education along with other regional educational councils to review its current policy of recruiting, training and supporting principals and employing physical resources. It will also enable the ministry to improve its training programmes for current principals so as to promote improved leadership effectiveness.

It is also expected that this research will assist supervisors, curriculum planners and senior education managers to bridge the gap between national education policy makers and the education field represented by schools, school leaders, teachers and learners. This is expected to be carried out through the maximised shared understanding of all stakeholders in the education sector of the importance of school effectiveness, school leadership and related impacts on student achievement in education. Therefore, this research will provide these parties with substantial knowledge (including implications) in relation to the application of research findings in education improvement. The researcher strongly believes in the importance of reforming education using a bottom up approach, as stated by Scheerens (2000). This approach will be presented and accounted for properly in the following chapters.

The results and content of this research will instrumentally serve to further increase the awareness of current and future principals of their roles in both improving their schools' outcomes and developing their leadership skills. The expected paradigm shift towards principals' awareness in the UAE, as encouraged by this research, may support future research conducted on SE and leadership effectiveness in the Gulf context. This is especially so in light of the fact that no similar research has been conducted in the UAE, according to the best knowledge of the researcher.

1.9 Definition of Terms

A key term in the present study is 'school effectiveness' which can be best defined by measures of the ultimate product of schooling (e.g. Rutter et al., 1979; Mortimore et al., 1988a; Bosker and Scheerens, 1989): by students progressing further than expected

(Sammons et al., 1995:1), growth in student achievement (Williams, 1992:34), attainment of the school mission which goes beyond the mere academic achievement of students (McGaw et al., 1992; Sammons et al., 1996; Reynolds et al., 2000) or through consistent observable positive outcomes of students over a period of time (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Within this perspective, an effective school “can be defined as a school where cognitive, affective, psychomotor, social and aesthetic developments of students are supported in the best way” (Bakirci et al., 2012:3472).

A second key term in the current research is ‘effective school leadership’ or ‘educational leadership’, which “is a term that has to do mainly with the duties and responsibilities of the leadership team in order to improve school management, as well as students’ achievement” (Dina, 2013:290). This concept might also be defined as acting according to the school context and in response to the needs of staff and students, in an effort to realign their core values with the prevailing change and innovation framework (Day, 2003). Therefore, to be regarded as successful, leadership must be analysed from the perspective of the school stakeholders with due consideration of the societal values underpinning the school’s operations (Dimmock and Walker, 2005; Kyriakides and Campbell, 2004). The current study seeks to test whether this definition also applies to stakeholders in UAE schools and whether they perceive UAE school leaders to be effective.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

In spite of the fact that this study considers international standards and measures of school effectiveness, the results are confined to local schools in the UAE, and in Abu Dhabi in particular. The findings of this research are limited to this context and may not be generalisable to other contexts, except those with similar variables and conditions. Due to the fact that the number of secondary schools and principals in the UAE is small in comparison with their counterparts in many other countries around the world, the results are confined to secondary schools and their principals in the UAE.

In addition, gathering highly robust data on the qualities of principals and the outcomes of schooling would require the application of large scale qualitative and longitudinal research methods. Further, the researcher has conducted this research as an individual at a time when research dealing with education policy and reform can be better conducted by coordinated large-scale national efforts. Notwithstanding this, the researcher believes this

study to be robust within the terms and the context in which the research is presented, as it is rooted in a specific regional and local context and is informed by the researcher's immersion in the educational system under consideration.

1.11 Organisation of the Study

This thesis is presented over seven chapters. The following chapter, Chapter Two presents a brief history of the structure of the education system in the UAE, together with a description of the UAE education policy landscape. Chapter Three reviews the school effectiveness literature with a specific focus on the characteristics of effective schools recognised worldwide. Chapter Four reviews the literature relating to the qualities of school leadership that contribute to effectiveness in schools. Chapter Five reports on the research design, methodologies and the conduct of the study. Chapter Six presents quantitative data results derived from the survey. Chapter Seven presents qualitative data results based on face-to-face interviews and, finally, Chapter Eight presents the findings, related conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE UAE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the development of its educational system. The first part provides background information on the UAE, while the second part consists of a general overview of the development of education in the UAE from early this century up until the present day, including detailed information on the modern era, which is known as 'Formal Education after Federation'.

2.2. UAE Demographic Context

The UAE covers a land area of approximately 83,600 km², including some 200 islands. As depicted in the map below, the UAE is bordered in the north by the Arabian Gulf, in the east by the Gulf of Oman and the Sultanate of Oman, in the south by the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and in the West by Qatar and Saudi Arabia (UAE Yearbook, 2010).



The first inhabitants of this region worked predominantly in trade, pearl-diving and fishing. In the seventh century, they were blessed with Islam which became the religion of the state. In the early nineteenth century, the local rulers signed treaties with Great Britain to put themselves under its protection. In 1952, Great Britain created the so-called seven Trucial Emirates in order to later establish a union between them and, on 2 December 1971, the UAE was formally announced as an independent federation while maintaining a form of autonomy for each Emirate. The UAE consists of seven emirates, namely (in order

of size): Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm Quwayan, Ajman, Ras Al-Khaimah and Al Fujayrah (UAE Yearbook, 2010).

2.3. The Political System

Under the Presidency of the UAE comes the Federal Supreme Council, consisting of the rulers of the seven Emirates. This federation holds supreme constitutional, legislative and executive authority, drawing up the general policies and legislating the various Federal laws and regulations. The Cabinet or Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister is the executive authority for the federation. Under the control of the President and the Supreme Council, it manages all internal and foreign affairs of the federation according to the Constitutional and Federal laws. Corresponding to the Federal institutions are the local governments of the seven Emirates.

Varying in size, these Emirates have evolved alongside the country's ongoing growth, and their mechanisms do differ from one Emirate to another, depending on the variables of population, area and degree of development. The largest and most populous Emirate, Abu Dhabi, has its own central governing organisation, the Executive Council, under which sit a number of separate departments, equivalent to ministries. Abu Dhabi also has a National Consultative Council, chaired by a speaker, with 60 members selected from among the Emirates' main tribes and families. The Dubai Executive Council, established in 2003, has similar functions as it is the UAE's second largest Emirate. Sharjah and Ajman also have their own Executive Councils (UNESCO, 2010/11).

Since their inception, the process of unifying the seven Emirates has gained enormous momentum, especially as their leaderships, along with the local indigenous people, have worked together towards integration, in a spirit of modernity and ambition, to bring about comprehensive development and create a state that by regional standards appears to be progressing towards more efficient and effective models of policymaking.

2.4. UAE Economy

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan (1918-2004), ruler of Abu Dhabi and president of the UAE at its inception, planned to take advantage of the potential reserves of the oil industry to improve the living standards of UAE citizens. He oversaw the development of all the Emirates and invested oil revenues into a welfare state system with an emphasis on

healthcare, education, employment and a solid national infrastructure. According to the World Fact Book (C. I. A., 2013), the UAE ranks 48th in the world for per capita income. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) categorises the country as a promising high-income developing economy. The growing oil industry and economic prosperity have attracted a large influx of foreign workers from all over the world, amounting to more than three quarters of the present total population (estimated at 8.4 million). Amongst the national indigenous Emirati population of approximately one million, 60 per cent live either in Abu Dhabi or Dubai, which are, by and large, the two most prosperous Emirates. The growth of this population correlates with the considerable economic development that has taken place in the UAE since the commencement of oil exports in the 1960s. According to Ministry of Labour estimates, the number of registered expatriate workers grew from 3.11 million in 2007 to 4.07 million in 2008, a 31 per cent annual increase (Ministry of Economy, 2013). This foreign workforce encompasses various nationalities such as Arabs, Iranians, Filipinos, Indians and large numbers of Europeans and Americans. Figure 2.1 shows the percentage of each nationality.

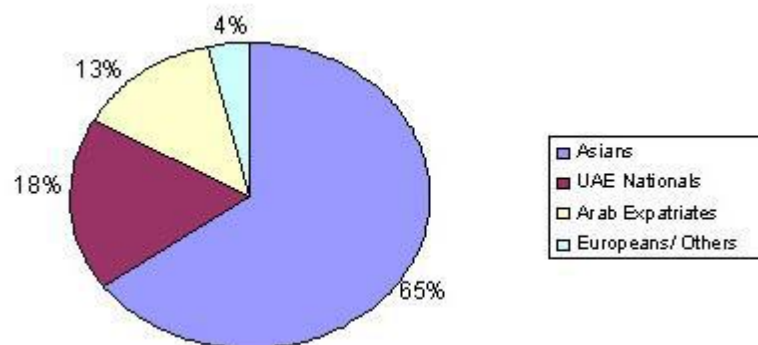


Figure 2 1 Percentage various workforce nationalities in the UAE (World Bank, 2013)

Expatriates now represent approximately 70 per cent of the UAE population. Figure 2.2 reflects the ever increasing demand for foreign labour since 1950, which in recent years has amounted to 88 per cent of the total workforce in the UAE.

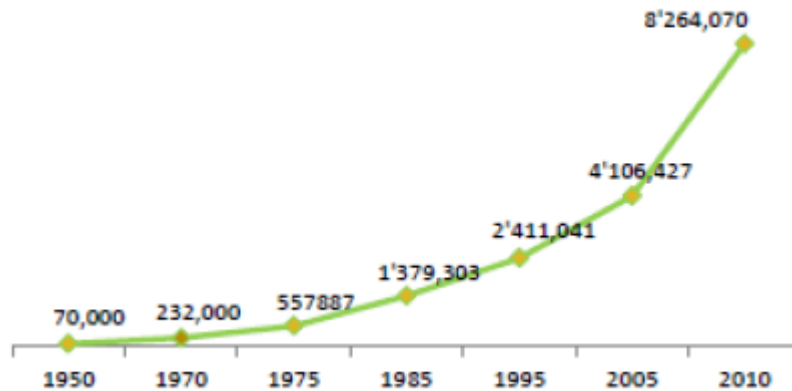


Figure 2 2 UAE total population estimate 1950-2010 (NQA, 2013)

Figure 2.3 illustrates the proportion of nationals to expatriates out of the total population.

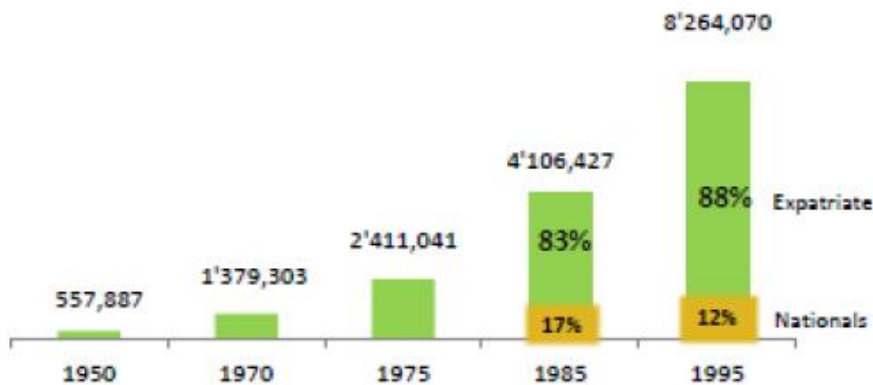


Figure 2 3 Proportion of nationals to expatriates in the population

The main cause of the UAE population growth has been the high demand for a workforce to meet the requirements of the huge infrastructure projects undertaken in the country during the 1970s and early 1980s, as well as the ongoing developments in all economic aspects to the present time. In addition, the UAE government follows liberal trade policies and operates an open business environment underpinned by a stable government structure. The UAE government has developed special fiscal policies to ensure strong economic growth while moving towards the adoption of such International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommendations as medium-term fiscal plans and further fiscal consolidation between

federal and Emirate budgets (Kapiszewski, 2003; IMF, 2014). Petroleum and natural gas exports also play an important role in the economy, especially in Abu Dhabi. More than 85 per cent of the UAE economy was based on the export of natural resources in 2009 (UAE Ministry of Economy, 2013). However, the UAE has always tried to reduce its dependency on oil exports by diversifying the economy, particularly in the financial, tourism and construction sectors (Al Ali, 2008; IMF, 2014).

2.5. The UAE as a Tolerant Country

Being a hub of attraction for many nationalities from around the world, and whilst sticking to its own national culture and heritage values, the UAE has adopted a policy of openness and tolerance where various communities peacefully co-exist regardless of their religious beliefs. In fact, although firmly committed to Islam as a prevailing religion, the UAE is now home to over 40 churches and cathedrals, and other centres of worship for other religions. At the level of international relations, the UAE is keen to promote constructive dialogue and bilateral co-operation based on the peaceful resolution of imminent conflicts both within the Arab world and the broader Islamic community, and across the wider international community (Congress, 2007).

2.6. Social Stratification in the UAE

The UAE indigenous society can be broken down into four main groups based on their level within the power structure and decision-taking processes. These groups are summarised below. The large expatriate community tends not to be engaged in the power and policy development structures that lie at the heart of this research.

2.6.1. Al Mashyikaa

Al Mashyikaa is the supreme ruling authority within the power hierarchy. As such, it undertakes the bulk of the decision-making policy whereby it governs the other Emirates from within the capital Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

2.6.2. The Upper Class

The upper class consists of a small group of wealthy families (e.g. the merchant class, known as Tujjar, traditionally pearling merchants who now sell international consumer goods).

2.6.3. The Middle Class

The middle class combines both government employees and professional people working in the oil and gas companies, in addition to civil servants and a small percentage of private sector employees.

2.6.4 The Working Class

In light of the literature related to the analysis of the architecture of the social classes in the UAE tribal society from an economic perspective, it is difficult to claim that there exists a working class – in its traditional communist or socialist meaning – in the UAE. The skyrocketing of petroleum revenues has proved a major factor in changing the social order within Emirati society (Rugh, 2007; Davidson, 2008; Gonzalez et al., 2008) to the point that Godwin (2006:1) considers that ‘UAE nationals are a minority in their own country’. On the other hand, Gonzalez (2008) contends that the labour force consists primarily of non-nationals and that, despite efforts to increase the proportion of nationals in the labour force, little has changed in the last decade, as only 8 per cent of the 2005 workforce in the UAE was Emirati, which is very similar to the percentage in 1995.

However, it is noteworthy that having a population composed of such a large proportion of expatriates has a deep impact on social mobility in the UAE, which is subject to three variables: first, and in order of importance, the original citizens with their own Islamic traditions and values; second, the expatriates representing the majority of the population with their miscellaneous religious and moral beliefs; and, finally, the new ever-changing economic requirements and contingencies.

2.7. Culture and Education in the UAE

2.7.1. Islam and the Learning Culture in the UAE Context

The UAE is a predominantly Muslim country. Religious education is considered the oldest type of education in the UAE (Ajawi, 1991; Mustafa et al, 1993) and indeed was the only popular form of education prior to the implementation of formal education. Therefore, Islamic values are considered an important asset of the schooling process and policy; the more so as there are clear connections between the goals of schools and the Islamic cultural context, based on the following premises:

- Enabling and preparing the individual to perform his/her duties towards the family and society.
- Respecting diversity in the local society and translating this attitude into good deeds.
- Being a full citizen who is entitled not only to enjoy his/her own rights but who also contributes to the common social wellbeing.
- Ascribing to the present civilisational exigencies of modern life and humanity.

Hence, education in the UAE manages to endorse the aforementioned tenets and teachings of Islam according to the following instrumental framework:

- Fostering a scientific mind-set based on the spirit of research and experimentation to cope with the surrounding rapid changes in the world.
- Providing operational solutions to current problems in ideology, economy and sociology, analysing them and introducing alternative Islamic solutions where possible.
- Encouraging youngsters to adopting a spirit of tolerance in line with the teachings of Islam.
- Adopting the illuminating positive aspects of the wider global civilisation for the benefit of local society.
- Teaching common universal values of love and respect for all fellow human beings everywhere.

As we can see, there is in theory some agreement between modern Western educational premises and objectives and those of Islamic education. In fact, although Islamic educational principles might apparently and obviously be different from those in modern secular educational philosophy, there appears to be no conflict with the basic educational ethos of helping children to realise their full potential in life. This underpins both modern and Islamic educational systems.

2.7.2. Al Mutawaa Teachings and Informal Education

At the beginning of the twentieth century, as is common in most Islamic states, education was predominantly based on teaching Islam as it is a religion that exhorts science, education and the acquisition of knowledge. The pursuit of science and technology is in

general not in disaccord with Islamic thought and religious belief (Iqbal, 2007; Davidson, 2008).

There is no doubt that great Muslim scientists founded modern science; for example, Al-Razi (medicine) and Alberuni (science). Modern scientific methods were pioneered by Ibn Al-Haytham (known in the West as ‘Alhazen’) whose contributions are likened to those of Isaac Newton (Al-Khalili, 2009). In the 1030s and 1040s, the translation of books from Arabic into Latin really instigated the scientific changes of the twelfth century, and this again was the case in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the West, books were only translated from Arabic into Latin in the eighth and sixteenth centuries, during what is known as the Islamic Golden Age (Sabra, 1996).

Al-Katatib classes (primitive elementary Quranic schools) provided basic literacy and numeracy skills, that is, skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. Al Mutawaa teaching was very popular throughout the Arab world, with some parts of the Arab world calling it El Katateeb. Al Mutawaa is a religious male or female who teaches students at his or her home, or at the mosque, about the Quran, Islam’s holy book. In addition to the Quran, some Al Mutawaa teaching taught basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, although mostly no textbooks other than the holy Quran were used (Ajawi, 1991; Mustafa et al, 1993; Al Nabh, 1996).

The first known informal school, called Al-Taymyah Al-Mahmoodya, was established in 1905 in Sharjah by a merchant named Ali Al Mahmood. This school provided services for 16 years, with around 300 enrolled students. The modern education movement in the UAE was funded by the Kuwaiti government between 1963 and 1971, and was supervised by the Ministry of Education in Kuwait (Al Mutawa et al., 1990). In the wake of the establishment of the Federation, rising economic development led to the foundation of government schools in 1971, even though from 1971 to 1977 the Ministry of Education used syllabi developed in Kuwait for all educational levels (UNESCO, 2010 /11).

2.7.3. Formal Education after the Federation

Since its independence from Great Britain in 1971, the UAE government has invested a huge amount of funding in the expansion of social services, with education being a top priority (NQA, 2013). Sheikh Zayed pointed out that “The real asset of any advanced

nation is its people, especially the educated ones, and the prosperity and success of the people are measured by the standard of their education” (Jayanti, 2007).

With the increased income generated by the country’s expanding oil production, education in the UAE has advanced to its current state, offering modern facilities and ICT systems. These drastic changes have had a far-reaching effect on public and private education systems, as well as on other components of the education system such as adult education, technical education and religious education, which have all been affected by the mass development of public education.

The importance of education has been confirmed by Article 17 of the UAE Constitution which states that education, one of the main factors in the eradication of illiteracy and a clear cornerstone for the progress of society, is mandatory at the primary stage and free at all stages within the UAE. Therefore, the Acts of the Federal Law No.1- M (7) -1972 which were concerned with the mandates of the ministries and the ministers’ authority allocated the following responsibilities to the Ministry of Education.

- Making education compulsory at the primary stage and disseminating it across the whole citizen population.
- Drawing up educational plans and preparing curricula, examination systems and literacy programmes.
- Establishing schools and institutes, licensing private schools and supervising them (Federal law N. 1-M (7) - 1972).

The Educational Policy document prepared by the Ministry of Education is in accordance with the highest political directives to ensure education for all and to prepare future generations and equip them with the knowledge to cope with the challenges of the present era and any future technological changes. Many parties have participated in the preparation of the documents including various organisations, establishments and institutions related to education, since it is the responsibility of the whole community to ensure a high quality of education (MOE, 1996d).

2.7.4 Principles of Educational Policy

According to UNESCO (2010/11), local Educational Policy depends on the fundamental constituents of UAE society, which are:

- Islam being the state's official religion.
- The UAE Federal Constitution being the source of laws.
- The heritage and history of the UAE.
- Estimates and expectations of population growth, which indicate that there is a continuous increase in the population of those below 15 years of age, which is school age.
- Rapid economic development.
- UAE foreign policy and Gulf, Arab, Islamic and International relations.
- The status and accomplishment of education.
- Future aspirations and challenges.

2.8 Stages of the Education System

The UAE education system has recently been reconstructed into four schooling stages (see figure 2.4) (MOE, 2010/2011). Primary and secondary education is provided for all UAE citizens. The existing education structure, which was established in the early 1970s, is a four-tier academic system covering 14 years of education (Gaad et al., 2006):

- Pre-primary (Kindergarten) – age three and a half to five and a half years.
- Primary (Cycle 1) – length of programme in years (five), age level from six to 11.
- Preparatory (Cycle 2) – length of programme in years (four), age level from 12 to 15.
- Secondary (Cycle 3) – length of programme in years (three), age level from 16 to 18, Final Certificate/diploma issued: Secondary School Leaving Certificate.
- Technical Secondary School – length of programme in years (six), age level from 12 to 18. Final Certificate/diploma issued: Technical Secondary Diploma.

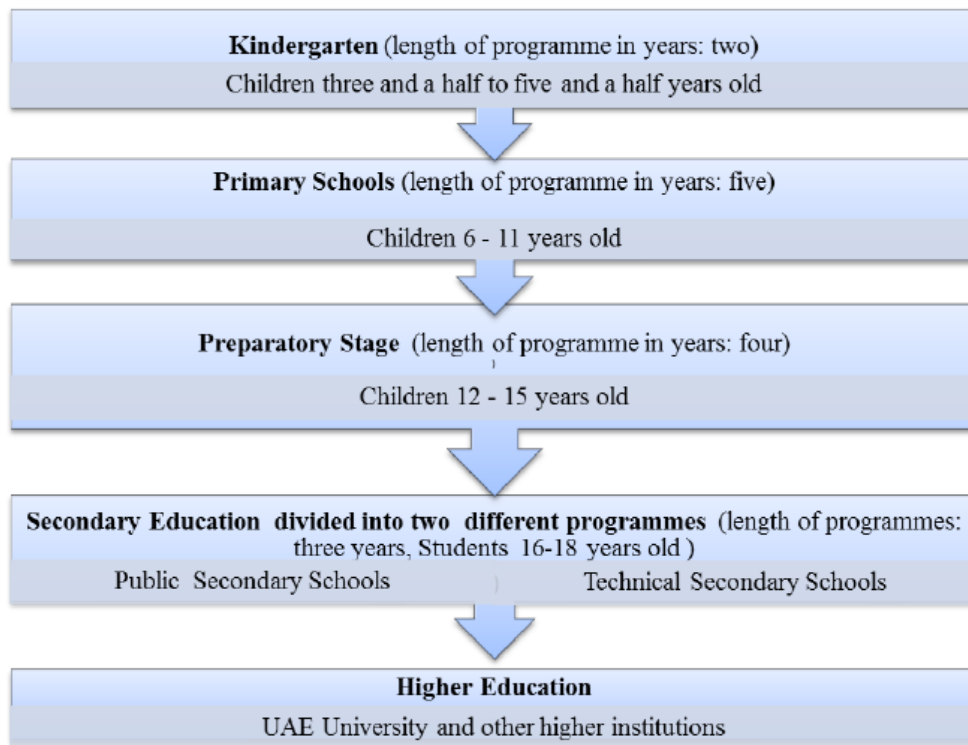


Figure 2 4 General structure of the education system in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Source: Abu Dhabi Education Council (2010)

Primary school education is mandatory for all UAE citizens. Government policy is to provide staff/student ratios of 1:20 at kindergarten and primary levels, and 1:15 at preparatory and secondary levels. The existing staff/student ratios are well within this proposed range.

Technical Secondary School is *an alternative* to preparatory and secondary schools; it is aimed at students who are not academically inclined and replaces the preparatory and secondary stages of education.

According to the Educational Statistical Group (MOE, 2010/2011), in 2010/2011 there were 725 public schools in the UAE serving 268,272 students in addition to 108 public secondary schools (the focus of this research) serving 61,394 students. See Table 2.1: Distribution of Schools (General Education) at Educational Zones for the academic year (2010/2011), Ministry of Education, Research and Studies Department (2010 / 2011), and Table 2.2: Distribution of Students (General Education) at Educational Zones for the academic year (2010/2011), Ministry of Education, Research and Studies Department (2010/2011).

Table 2 1 Distribution of schools (General Education), Ministry of Education, Research and Studies Department (2010/2011)

Educational Zones	SCHOOLS							
	Kindergarten	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Secondary	Multiple Stages	Religious	Technical	Total
Abu Dhabi Zone	22	41	28	24	13		1	129
Al Ain Zone	18	38	22	18	32	1	2	131
Western Zone	6	12	4	4	17			43
Dubai Zone	11	22	17	13	15	1	1	80
Sharjah Zone	12	21	15	12	20			80
Sharjah Office	8	14	9	8	6			45
Ajman Zone	7	12	9	7	5	1		41
Umm Quwayan Zone	4	8	4	2	5			23
Fajayrah Zone	10	20	10	6	15		1	62
Ras Al Khima Zone	16	24	16	14	20		1	91
Total	114	212	134	108	148	3	6	725

Table 2 2 Distribution of Students (General Education) at Educational Zones for the academic year (2010/2011) - Ministry of Education, Research and Studies Department (2010 / 2011)

Educational Zones	STUDENTS						
	Kindergarten	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Secondary	Religious	Technical	Total
Abu Dhabi Zone	5841	22222	19918	14493		612	63086
Al Ain Zone	5061	19151	16366	11168	254	1032	53032
Western Zone	1207	4402	3636	2484			11729
Dubai Zone	1832	9554	8426	6877	240	885	27814
Sharjah Zone	1929	6486	7738	6134			22287
Sharjah Office	1905	5477	4597	3543			15522
Ajman Zone	1507	5370	4560	3858	360		15655
Umm Quwayan Zone	665	1974	1866	1336			5841
Fajayrah Zone	2642	7436	6207	4764		425	21474
Ras Al Khima Zone	3521	11397	9572	6737		605	31832
Total	26110	93469	82886	61394	854	3559	268272

2.8.1 Secondary schools

Under the previous educational system established in 1971, the preparatory education cycle catered for ages 12 to 15, qualifying students for general or technical secondary education. In the new structure introduced in 2000/2001, the preparatory education cycle, which is herein named Cycle Two, covers grades (six to nine). In the third secondary school cycle, after a common first year of core subjects, students can choose between a Science and an

Arts track. Technical education comprises three main paths: technical, agricultural and commercial. At the end of the general and technical secondary stages, students receive the secondary school-leaving certificate or the technical secondary diploma after passing the general examination. From 2010/2011, the organisation of the school year for government schools changed from two to three semesters with a total of 180 school days (UNESCO, 2010/11).

2.9. Institutions Managing the Education System in the UAE

The responsibility for education lies with three main government bodies along with other educational bodies.

2.9.1 Ministry of Education

By 1972, the Federal Ministry of Education (MOE) was firmly established, and all schools came under its supervision. Significant changes have taken place in the UAE educational system in the 25 years that followed federation. The UAE Constitution specifically identifies education as an essential right of all citizens and specifies that it must be supported by the state (UAE Yearbook, 2010). Hence, the Ministry of Education's objective is to provide "suitable opportunities so that the learner can, in a fully comprehensive way, develop spiritually, mentally, socially, psychologically and physically to the extreme extent of their potential in a way that assures a balance between self-fulfilment and serving their society through responding to modern age requirements and social and economic development" (MOE, 2007:22).

Thus, all levels of public schools are free and compulsory for children from the ages of six to 18 (UNESCO, 2010/11). The Ministry of Education also applies Islamic rules to the education of children; as such, male and female students are educated separately (Gaad, 2001). Added to this, there are many ethnic groupings, sets and tribes within the society, all of whom must be respected and their beliefs observed (Congress, 2007). Therefore the education system is firmly aligned with the nature, culture and philosophy of UAE society (MOCA, 2013).

A new organisational structure was approved for the Ministry of Education in 2010 (see Appendix A). The new structure identifies the Ministry's tasks as providing education for all citizens of the UAE, developing educational plans, preparing curricula and examination

systems, and providing adult education programmes, in addition to establishing schools and institutes and monitoring their performance.

The role of the Ministry of Education is to oversee all Emirate-based education councils and authorities depending on it as an organism responsible for carrying out the National Strategy of the UAE (UNESCO, 2010/11). Thus, the Ministry of Education has divided the country into nine educational zones or offices. Smaller zones are known as educational offices. The zones are Abu Dhabi Zone, Al Ain Zone, Eastern Zone, Dubai Zone, Sharjah Zone, Ras Al Kamiah Zone, Western Zone, Ajman Office, and Umm Al Quwain Office. The Abu Dhabi Education Zone is the largest in terms of students, school staff, and zone staff. Al Ain Education Zone is the largest in terms of inspectors, and is similar to the Abu Dhabi Educational Zone in terms of the number of schools. Umm Al Quwain Education Office is the smallest of all the fields.

2.9.2 Educational Zones and Local Offices

Educational zones and local offices make up the second education body that controls the education system. A key component of government strategy has been the decentralisation of educational authority from the Federal Ministry of Education to local education bodies in each Emirate. Three major bodies are the Abu Dhabi Education Council for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (covering three regions), the Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority for the Emirate of Dubai and the Northern Emirates' Council (including the remaining four Emirates), which have the full jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and whose task is to improve the education sector (UNESCO, 2010/11).

2.9.3 Other Educational Bodies

There are several other bodies involved in the education process.

2.9.3.1 The Ministry of Defence

The Ministry of Defence has set up its own schools for students from the armed forces, although the curricula of the Ministry of Education are used. There is coordination between the two ministries in the fields of supervision, evaluation, examinations, textbooks and syllabi.

2.9.3.2 The Women's Association

The Women's Association plays a positive role in the education process through its social and development centres, heritage revival centres and classes held in the Association's centres and societies in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. The General Women's Union (GWU) was established on 27 August 2008 and includes several women's associations (Abu Dhabi Women's Association, Dubai Women's Association, Sharjah Women's Union Association, Ajman Um Al Mo'mineen Women Association, Umm Al Quwain Women Association and Ras Al Khaimah Women's Association). The Union contributes to setting the general policy for women and drawing up the plans necessary to advance women's affairs in all fields, as well as plans and programmes that guarantee the integration of women in the comprehensive development plans and enable them to perform their roles in life without discrimination (UNESCO, 2010/11).

2.9.3.3 Special Education Schools

Special Education Schools (schools for students with learning difficulties) fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Schools are licensed by the relevant educational zone in the Emirate in which they operate. The Ministry of Education oversees all Emirate-based education councils and authorities. Nurseries, day-care centres and crèches are licensed by the Ministry of Social Affairs (UNESCO, 2010/11).

All these educational bodies are working to improve the quality of education in light of the changes taking place within both the education system and wider society. The Ministry of Education, with the consultation and supervision of cabinet affairs, has produced a policy plan outlining a strategy for further educational development by adopting initiatives such as Vision 2020 which aims to create local regional councils in each Emirate of the UAE. In short, all of these efforts reflect a strong commitment to ensure that graduates are properly equipped to integrate within the potential workforce and to contribute to the country's welfare according to a solid and sound framework inspired by the Islamic heritage, the national heritage of the UAE, the country's constitution and the country's incumbent developmental priorities.

The aforementioned four pillars are endorsed to be at the foundation of any forthcoming plans and any decisions addressing social, economic and strategic needs. In this respect, the present thesis will attempt to shed some light on the way this vision – based on these

pillars – is implemented in the educational system organism in the UAE. Thus, ADEC “seeks to develop education and educational institutions in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, implement innovative educational policies, plans and programmes that aim to improve education, and support educational institutions and staff to achieve the objectives of national development in accordance with the highest international standards” (see [ADEC Website](#)).

2.10 Current State of the Art of the UAE Education System

2.10.1 Poor Quality System

On the eve of its independence from Great Britain in 1971, the UAE government invested generously in various planned educational programmes. This commitment to the education sector is further demonstrated by the 2001 Federal budget where the largest allocation of government funds was for the provision of education (Al Sulayti, 2002; Cooper et al., 2015). Nevertheless, despite this substantial funding from the government, there remained some significant pitfalls in the public education system (Shaw et al., 1995; Al Nowais, 2004; Cooper et al., 2015). Muhanna (1990) notes that in the past the rates of student dropouts and students repeating a year have been higher in the UAE than in any other Gulf State. A study by Al Kaabi (2005) also highlights a serious situation with regard to attrition rates in public schools. Attrition is considered to include all teachers who leave the classroom and do not continue teaching, whether for short or long periods of time, for whatever reason.

As the focus of this study is secondary schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, it is noteworthy that students have been assessed in public schools under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in cooperation with regional councils. Two types of examinations have been administered: local exams by the regional district and the schools themselves, and a standardised assessment divided into two types: a National Assessment combination of EMSA (External Measure of Student Achievement) tests in Arabic reading and writing, English reading and writing, mathematics and PIPS (Performance Indicators in Primary Schools), in addition to an International Assessment consisting of PIRLS (The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) and TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study). In terms of students’ attainment in reading, mathematics and science, small improvement gains in relation to international standards are revealed in the PISA results from 2009

(MOE, 2013, Cooper et al.,2015). PISA test results included a total of 10,867 UAE students, with the international comparison of test results showing that grade 9 students' performance in the UAE was below international standards (NQA, 2013; Cooper et al.,2015) (see Figure 2.5). Out of a total of 65 countries, students in UAE ranked 42nd in English reading and 41st in science and mathematics, placing UAE ahead of Qatar, Jordan and Tunisia. In the UAE, girls outperformed boys in the three subjects. English reading results revealed that 60% of students showed proficiency at or above the baseline needed to participate effectively and productively in life. This compares to 81% in the OECD countries (OECD, 2010).

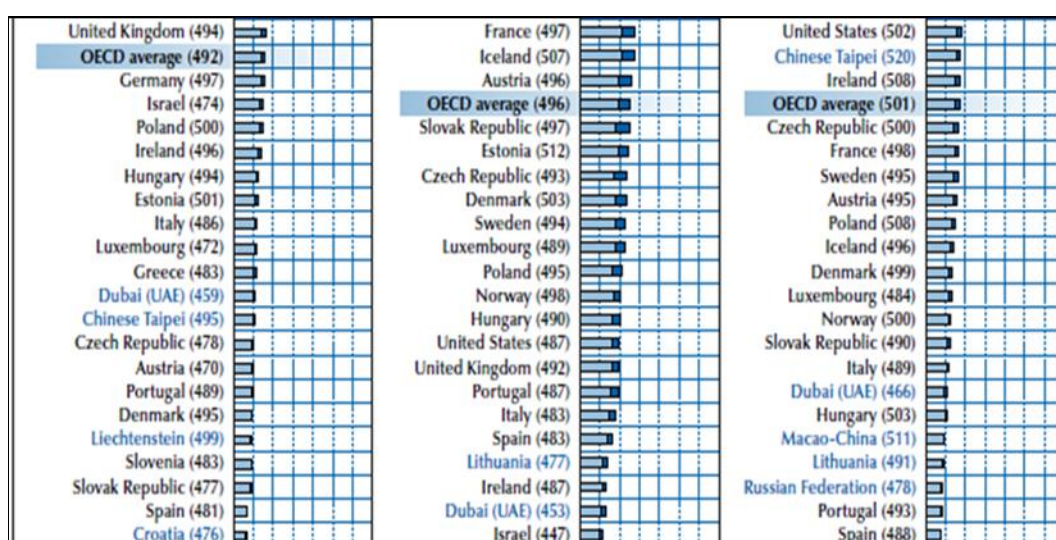


Figure 2 5 Profile of Students Performance in Mathematics and Science (OECD, 2010)

Hokal and Shaw (1999) have pointed to a lack of cohesion among the three elements of the UAE education system: the administrative / bureaucratic system linking schools with the Ministry, the local school system of supervision and course delivery and the jobs market, which is the ultimate destination for most school leavers.

Although the UAE has achieved much in the field of education despite the young age of its population as a new nation, there is a real awareness of the fact that in general the quality of education is poor in all Gulf countries, the UAE included. For instance, Al Sulayti (2002) observes that “... the poor quality of educational system in the Gulf countries is attributed to high repetition rates.... Moreover, the educational system in the Gulf countries suffers from serious weak performance/low quality of teachers due to lack of teaching skills and knowledge of the recent teaching and learning techniques/tools”.

This was confirmed by studies commissioned by the Ministry of Education in UAE in 2001 and 2005 which found that only 44 per cent of teachers had a degree in education, and that most new teachers spent only two weeks on average in training before commencing work (Al-Ittihad, 2005). In state schools, according to the same studies, teachers were paid significantly less than their international counterparts (Al-Ittihad, 2005).

Assessments undertaken by the Australian Council for UAE Ministry of Education indicate that only 3-4 per cent of grade 12 graduates, in terms of pupil performance, are able to continue with higher education. This came as a 'big shock' for policy makers as it is a major indicator of the 'failing' of secondary schools to populate the labour market with Emirati workers (McGaw, 1992; Cooper et al., 2015). This led to the engagement of all grade 12 students in a foundation year in national universities, where higher education preparation was required to bring them up to the required levels in Science, Mathematics, English and Ethics (NQA, 2013). Therefore, the University Foundation Program (UFP) was established in 2002 to help students make the transition from high school to university by building up their communication skills (Academic Arabic and English) and mathematics proficiency (Algebra, College Algebra and Trigonometry) to levels required by the UAEU colleges (UAEU, website).

Addressing the performance of public schools at primary and secondary levels and raising higher education outcomes undoubtedly involves increased responsibilities for the Federal Government. As a consequence, school improvement has resided at the top of the Government's agenda for the past decade. In 2009, 23 per cent of the Federal budget was earmarked for education. However, the challenges associated with improving the education system are ongoing.

2.10.2 Lack of Administrative Flexibility

Similar to the other GCC countries', the UAE school system suffers from a lack of administrative flexibility. Shaw et al. (1995:9) stated that "A central problem for Gulf States' school systems is that while they are administered and relatively closely supervised by the local ministries of education, their activities do not take place within a coherent and explicit tradition of public policy. It is only quite recently, for example, that a committee has been set up to develop the countries' educational policy..... Of course such traditions are not created quickly."

Indeed, such a viewpoint put forth two decades ago is still valid and applicable to the current situation in the region and in particular to that of the UAE.

2.10.3 Shortage of Male Teaching Staff

Another problem within the educational system is the reluctance of Emirati males to work in the teaching profession. UNESCO data from the Middle East shows that in 2010, only 14 per cent of teachers in primary education in the UAE were males, while neighbouring Gulf country, Kuwait, recorded 10 per cent of its primary school teachers as being male, and Qatar 11 per cent (UNESCO, 2010/11). In the UAE, the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (the geographical context of this study) currently has around 50 male Emirati teachers working in primary schools. The pre-service teachers interviewed in this study will, upon graduation, make up around 10 per cent of this group, should they decide to teach. In the Emirate of Dubai, only 5 per cent of primary schools teachers are male, and only 14 per cent of those males are UAE nationals; in other words, a total of 0.7 per cent of primary school teachers are male nationals (Knowledge and Human Development Authority – KHDA, 2010). Therefore, expatriates still dominate the teaching profession, especially within boys' schools. Given that there is a strong cultural desire for male teachers to be predominantly engaged in the education of male pupils, this gender gap is a concern in the system and in wider UAE society.

Dickson et al. (2014) interviewed a group of Emirati primary school teachers during their first year of teaching. It was found that these teachers faced multiple challenges, some of which are universal among novice teachers, such as managing student behaviour and learning to cope with their new workload. However, they also faced additional unique challenges, such as navigating inter-cultural relationships with colleagues (as they were working among mainly Western teaching staff) and balancing their new working lives with their demanding home lives.

2.10.4 Centralised Administration

In the Gulf region, policies, strategies and general resolutions are characterised by a hierarchical approach, which is the predominant management style (Welsh and Raven, 2006). Typically, the actors involved in the decision-making processes for curriculum development include senior MOE officials and counsellors, the professional staff of the MOE Centre for Curricula and Educational Materials Development, specialists in different

subjects, educational zones, supervisors and some senior teachers, as well as advisory teams from the UAE University. Furthermore, the MOE Assistant Under-Secretary for Educational Programmes and Curricula and the Director of the Centre for Curricula play key roles in decision making and implementation. Proposals and preliminary studies can be initiated by the regional councils and submitted to the MOE's senior officials. Discussions within those circles can lead to specific recommendations, but the final decision is the responsibility of the Minister of Education. This shows that the decision-making process is highly centralised as it is undertaken in the headquarters of the Ministry of Education then issued to the educational zones throughout the country. Schools, teachers and supervisors take part in curriculum related decisions only by submitting their suggestions and recommendations, and also by providing the centre with feedback on the curricula in use, but in the end they have a limited effect on the decision-making process (UNESCO, 2010/11).

2.10.5 Little Emphasis on School Effectiveness in the UAE

There is a lack of educational field studies, and this needs to be dealt with in order to address the reality of the education field in the UAE. The UAE needs to carry out empirical studies concerning educational issues so as to identify solutions for the decision-makers at the top of the educational pyramid and to assist them in setting possible strategies. These strategies are described in the literature of Western education as the linkage between education inputs and outputs through the reality on the ground, in the path of integration with the requirements of the society as a whole. The provision of quality basic education will necessitate a change in the way schools function. From a self-reliance perspective, there seems to be a requirement for a school-based participatory needs assessment and an evaluation of school effectiveness. This could take the form of longitudinal studies aimed at empowering schools to identify their own problems and attempt to find solutions, as this study aims to do. To the best knowledge of the researcher, there is a scarcity of studies in this respect.

2.11. Educational Reform in the UAE

2.11.1. Reform Plans and Curriculum Development

The Ministry of Education, along with other education councils in each Emirate, has adopted an "initiatives' vision" as a series of five-year plans designed to improve the

learning abilities of students. As part of this programme, an enhanced curriculum for Mathematics and integrated Science was introduced at first-grade level for the 2003-2004 academic year in all government schools. The UAE government believes that a poor grasp of English is one of the main employment barriers for UAE nationals when competing in the UAE labour market. As the first remedial step, the Abu Dhabi Education Council has taken the pioneering decision to develop an elementary school pilot programme with Zayed University to enhance students' English language skills (Congress, 2007). Unsurprisingly, the earlier efforts of the UAE Government through the Ministry of Education were directed towards building a national teaching force, and to meet the challenge of attracting men in particular into teaching. Moreover, the UAE recognises that this will entail the concerted efforts of local educational councils in collaboration with the Ministry's plans to improve educational outcomes (MOCA, 2013).

The Ministry of Education, along with local councils, has released its strategic plan for educational reform and, since 2008; it has been working towards replacing the old school curriculum with a new standards-based curriculum developed by ADEC. This involves retraining teachers, developing a model for school accreditation and overhauling special education.

2.11.2. New Schools Model (NSM)

The aspiration of the UAE state to achieve 'localisation' – that is, the 'Emiratisation' of the workforce entails improving schooling outcomes by adopting new models of schooling. The New School Model's (NSM) objectives are to foster a child-centred learning environment, to develop Arabic and English language abilities, to foster critical thinking competences, to strengthen cultural identity and national citizenship, and to standardise the curriculum, pedagogy, resources and support across all ADEC schools. The types of NSMs are hereafter presented, based on the ADEC data.

2.11.3. Model Schools

There are 25 model schools in Abu Dhabi covering all stages of preparatory and secondary education. Zayed University and the Institute of Applied Technology manage teaching projects in these schools. Model schools started as a pilot programme in the 1994-1995 academic year with the establishment of the Al Ghazali Model School in the Abu Dhabi Educational Zone. Since model schools cannot admit all applicants due to limited spaces,

only students who are enrolled in first grade and meet the admission requirements are accepted (ADEC, Website).

The NSM is intended to provide the foundation for a better education system and better student outcomes. It focuses on the student, the teacher and the learning environment, the facilities, classrooms, management and parental involvement. With this model, a new curriculum and new teaching methods are introduced in order to enhance student performance by developing the student as a communicator, thinker and problem solver. The curriculum represents a new approach to teaching and learning. An active student-centred environment of teaching and learning is highly supported by schools, families and the community. The curriculum aims to develop strong Arabic and English literacy and numeracy, critical thinking, problem solving and creativity with an emphasis on cultural and national identity among Abu Dhabi students. This new approach to education focuses on creating bi-literate students – that is, students who are able to understand, speak, read and write in both English and Arabic. While Mathematics and Science are taught both in English and Arabic, history and Islamic studies subjects are taught by native Arabic speakers (ADEC, 2009).

2.11.4. Madares Al Gad (MAG)

The MAG programme was initiated in public schools by the Ministry of Education to develop bilingual UAE nationals. At the 50 Future Schools, where the MAG programme was initiated in 2008, the primary education curriculum was revamped and Mathematics and Science were being taught in the English language also (Ahmed, 2010).

The curriculum was first developed for three subjects in grades 1, 2 and 3 and only in English at high school level. This was in response to the weak English language skills of students, especially at university level. Over 90 per cent of students leaving public schools require remedial courses before they start a degree programme. The curriculum also aims to move from rote-based pedagogy, widely practiced in most public schools, to a learner-centred teaching approach. Although the complete results of the review and student outcomes have not yet been revealed, the MAG programme will not be suspended due to the preliminary positive impressions of the community.

‘There are a lot of changes happening in these schools with focus on a more efficient pedagogy’, said Al Shamsi, Chief Executive for Educational Affairs at the Ministry (Ahmed, 2010). When the concept of Future Schools was introduced, some principals believed that teaching subjects in the English language would dilute the Arabic language skills of UAE nationals. Al Shamsi believed these to be initial reservations and the Ministry began receiving positive feedback from parents and school management. ‘A young child can easily pick up more than one language’, said Al Shamsi (Ahmed, 2010). The Ministry has been facing a shortage of bilingual teachers in public schools. Therefore, to address this problem, the Ministry has initiated training programmes by inviting a team comprising teacher development professionals recruited from abroad to train teachers.

2.11.5. Abu Dhabi Education Council

The Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) is a new educational body with a responsibility to improve educational quality in the UAE and, as it is the subject of this study, it is necessary to shed some light upon its functions in relation to the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. ADEC was established in accordance with Law No. 24 dated September 2005. It is an independent corporate body that seeks to develop and implement innovative educational policies, plans and programmes that aim to improve education in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and to support educational institutions and staff in a manner that helps to achieve the objectives of national development (ADEC, Website). Recently, the Ministerial Council for Services has delegated ADEC the authority to deliver education in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and therefore become responsible for all the administrative and financial affairs of the working staff in the three educational zones in Abu Dhabi. Figure 2.6 below illustrates the Abu Dhabi Education Council’s organisational structure.

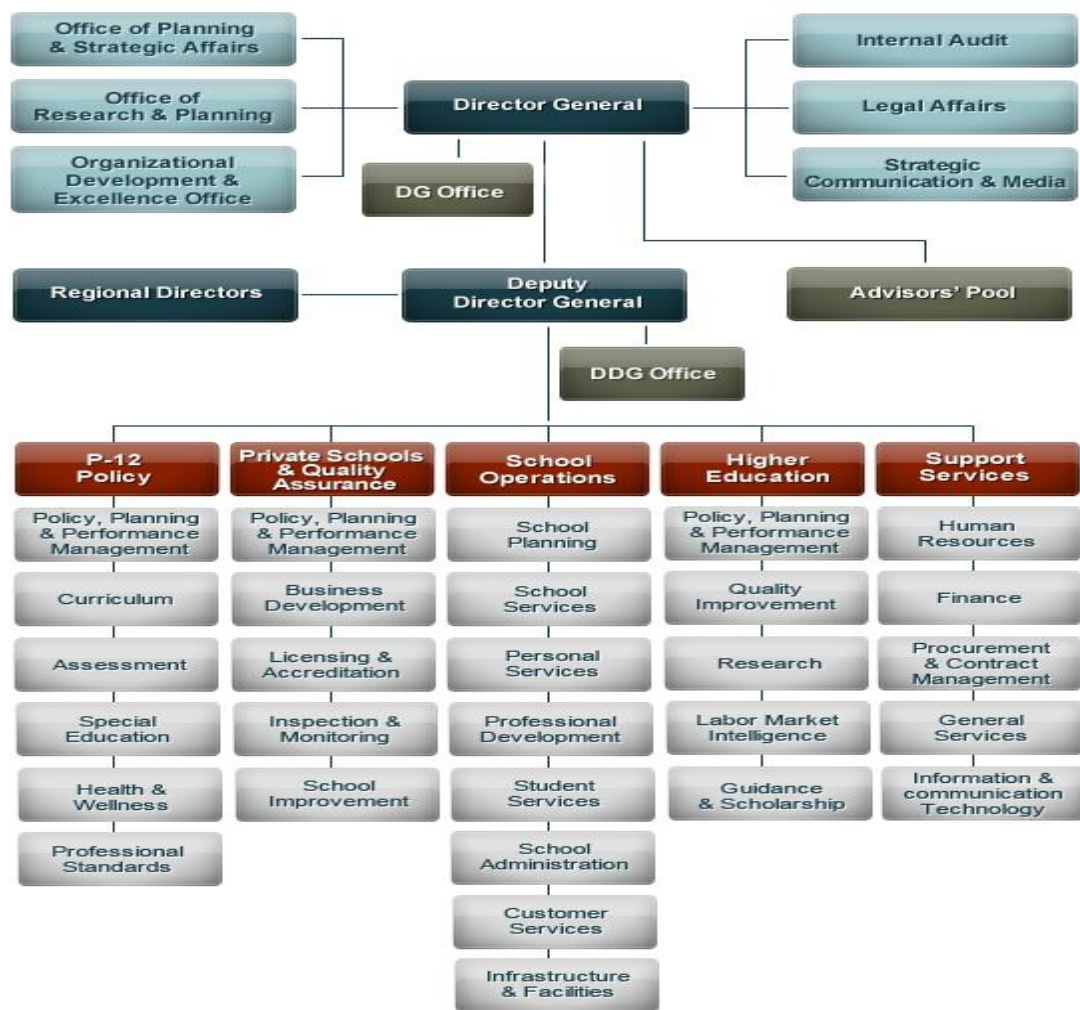


Figure 2 6 ADEC Organisational Structure. Source: ADEC website. NB. The researcher is professionally engaged in the ‘School Operations’ in the organisational chart above

ADEC has taken significant steps in the context of the development and improvement of the outputs of education. In June 2009, ADEC released its strategic plan for the P-12 sector, which charts the course of their reform agenda through to 2018. In addition, in 2006, ADEC launched a public private partnership programme (PPP) in its public schools. Initially seen as a pilot programme, PPP was to last for three years, but this has now been extended. The scheme pairs local schools with international firms which are charged with introducing Abu Dhabi’s new curriculum, increasing instruction hours in English and providing quality professional development for those teachers without degrees or certificates in education. There are currently 11 companies working in Abu Dhabi’s partnership schools (ADEC, Website).

ADEC has also increased the amount of instruction in English in Abu Dhabi’s schools, having hired close to 500 native English speakers to teach in its public schools. Problems

with teaching English in government schools in general have caused delays for pupils entering universities where English is the primary language of instruction. ADEC has also lengthened the school day to come closer to international standards and is also investing heavily in professional development for principals and teachers, as well as working towards teacher certification (Lewis, 2009).

In 2009, ADEC announced that it would replace 100 old school buildings with new environmentally sound designs over the next decade (Lewis, 2009). In addition, ADEC began its participation in international benchmarking exams such as PIRLS, PISA and TIMSS exams. The data has been used to target key areas for improvement in schools (ADEC, 2013).

2.12 School Principals in the UAE Education System

In the UAE, the management and leadership culture is shaped by a number of factors that influence the leaders of organisations. According to Hickson and Pugh (1995), four major factors have influenced management in the Arab world: the Bedouins and their wider tribal inheritance, Islam, foreign rule and the natural resources available in the Arab world. Society in the UAE is characterised by its tribal community and large families, which are managed by their leaders (the Al Sheik of the tribe or the leader of the family). In the tribal system, the sheik is the leader; he must be respected and his orders must be followed (Alangari, 1998). As a result of the spread of such culture, leaders in the Gulf region in general prefer to centralise their decisions. This cultural tradition around leadership influences contemporary administration.

In each school in the UAE, there is a principal, two vice principals, administrative staff and teaching staff. Administrative staff members support the administration and teaching staff. All school staff work to satisfy the school principal as he/she is assumed to reflect the leadership role and must be respected; his/her orders must be followed and, hence, school leaders often prefer to centralise their decisions.

The administrative staff consists of a school secretary, a social worker, a technical agent, a laboratory technician, a storekeeper, a librarian and a school supervisor. The principal is considered to be the person in charge of, and responsible for, issuing and monitoring both technical and administrative duties. This includes the control and follow-up of the overall

education programme and its implementation. The principal is also the head of the school board. He or she is assumed to provide structure and to ensure that the central regulations are followed (MOE, 2008). The deputy principal assists the principal with many duties, such as monitoring the administrative and financial affairs of the school, and acts on the principal's behalf in his/her absence. In each secondary Emirati school, nine school subjects are taught: Islamic Education; Arabic Language; English Language; Social Studies (Geography and History); Biological Sciences; Physics; Mathematics; Physical Education and Computer Science (MOE, 2008).

Figure 2.7 depicts the Emirati school structure. Principals in the UAE reside at the top of the school hierarchy and direct the school and its staff. They manage and supervise a wide range of tasks. Indeed, these responsibilities provide an insight into the complexities of the Emirati principals' role. The schools are usually governed by school principals in conjunction with the advice of the district supervisors. Theoretically, each school has a school board, which is assumed to be involved in governing the school. The board's membership consists of the principal's assistants, heads of the subject departments and a number of lead teachers in consideration of their role in general aspects of school governance. Any school formed resolution becomes subject to discussion within the board, as described in the School Work Guide, which outlines all the functions, responsibilities and tasks to be undertaken in the school (ADEC, Website).

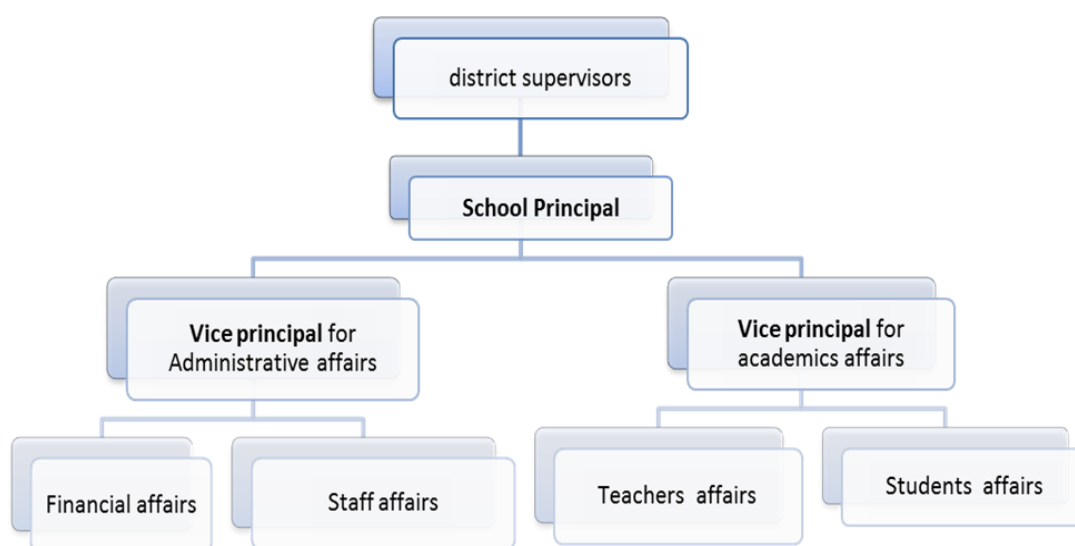


Figure 2 7 UAE School Structure (by researcher)

The Ministry of Education, in its document entitled 'Guidelines for Academic Occupations' (1999), describes the school principals' role as one of delivering professional and administrative functions under the direct supervision of the district supervisor. Thus, the principal leads the incumbent administration and management of the school's affairs, as a whole, through the regulations and instructions of the Ministry of Education. Further, the principal is assumed to work in accordance with the framework of the general goals of education. He/she is required to supervise all the school staff and to follow up their actions to ensure that they meet the appropriate standards. The principal can also motivate the working staff in various ways in order to raise the efficiency of the school where possible, and can develop action plans for the school. The principal is also expected to develop a spirit of collaboration and cooperation (MOE, 2008).

The principals do not select or appoint staff and thus the appointment of teachers and the development of the curriculum are beyond their control. The appointment and promotion of staff is centralised, and the curricula are centrally formed and circulated. In terms of policy, the school principal's role is focused on the implementation of the general plans, strategies and policies issued by the higher levels within the Ministry. In other instances, these executive plans are formed through the school board, presided over by the principal (MOE, 2008).

2.13 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has provided a brief overview of the history and the context of the educational system in the UAE. In addition, this chapter highlights some key aspects in relation to the political, economic and cultural systems and institutions that manage education in the UAE. Some of the current issues in the educational field have been presented. The reform process has also been portrayed, along with residual challenges that need to be addressed in the future. In the next chapter, the literature on school effectiveness studies will be reviewed.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUALISING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Introduction

This chapter will paint a picture of the rapid growth in insights within the area of School Effectiveness Research (SER). A critical review of some of the available literature on SE and school improvement, considered in most literature as intertwined concepts, is intended to better discern the SE knowledge base. Some of the broad ideas around what constitutes an effective school and school improvement in various international contexts are addressed. Similarly, the attributes and characteristics of an effective school are considered. There is a particular focus on some of the factors that are likely to contribute to improving the effectiveness of secondary schools.

In order to shed light on SE and school improvement, the researcher provided various definitions of the concept of an effective school in Chapter One in an attempt to set forth an operational definition that would instrumentally provide a conceptual framework for the thesis. In the present chapter, the research strands dealing with SE are delineated for a twofold purpose: outlining the international perspective of effective schools, and comparing that perspective with the UAE local context of effective schools to discern whether there is any sound impact of that perspective on the local UAE context. A substantial discussion on the importance of effective schools for the education system, as well as the methods used to evaluate school effectiveness, will later be considered. Then, the most important characteristics of effective schools are addressed. Following this, a synthetic comparative analysis of the most widely recognised features, factors and characteristics of effective and successful schools is conducted. Finally, a comprehensive perspective on effective schooling is derived from both regional and international contexts.

3.2. School Effectiveness Research Evolution

Although there is a considerable accumulation in the body of knowledge and ‘in the methodological sophistication’ related to the disciplines of SE and school improvement, Reynolds et al. (1996:2) maintain that this ‘growth in knowledge has produced as many unanswered questions as questions answered’. This might be attributed, on an international basis, to the fact that SE has been approached from various perspectives depending on variables such as ‘academic, emotional, moral, and aesthetic aspects, teachers’ satisfaction,

effective use of sources, accomplishing aims and environmental conformity’ (Sisman, 2011:4 in Dos, 2014:1454) in addition to educational leadership, parental involvement, expenditure and quality of the instructional personnel as well as performance indicators, development planning, school self-evaluation and improved efficiency (Reynolds, 1992).

Three major currents have been pinpointed by SER in the last three decades, representing major paradigm shifts in the body of knowledge related to the history of school effectiveness. A review of the publications tracking the stages of SER in countries such as the US, Great Britain, Australia and many more (Mortimore, 1991; Reynolds et al., 1994; Jansen, 1995; Gray et al., 1996; Sammons, 1999; Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000; Teddlie and Stringfield, 2007; Sammons, 2007; Townsend, 2007; Reynolds, 2010a; Teddlie, 2010; Hopkins et al., 2011; Reynolds et al., 2014) reveals the existence of three major stages in understanding the complexity of the phenomenon.

3.2.1. Stage One – Prior to the 1980s

SER first began in the United States of America and the movement began in the 1970s (MacBeath and Mortimore, 2001). Great Britain, however, did not have a similar interest until the early 1980s (Lezotte, 1992). SER started in the US as a reaction to the Coleman Report (1966) which produced ‘devastating conclusions’ (Kreft, 1993:105). Coleman concluded that schools had little or no impact on student attainment when the effects of the family and other background factors were taken into account. Marzano (2003:2) considers that the report ‘dealt a veritable deathblow to the belief that schools could overcome students’ backgrounds’ as ‘schools account for only about 10 per cent of the variance in student achievement—the other 90 per cent is accounted for by student background characteristics’.

Hence, the work of the first generation of researchers consisted of scrutinising issues relevant to input-output analyses, such as the socioeconomic status of the parents of students. As schools were barely involved in student achievement and performance, the research in this era concluded that ‘socioeconomic factors explained more variance in the achievement of students than did the amount of money allocated to schools, the quality of the teachers, and/or the appearance of the school buildings combined’ (Kreft, 1993:105). In the United Kingdom, for example, the 1980s were characterised by the growth of a substantial knowledge base in the field, notably following after the publication of the

Fifteen Thousand Hours study of 12 secondary schools in inner London, exploring reasons for differences between schools in terms of the levels of pupil behaviour and attainment (Rutter et al., 1979). The most seminal finding of the study was that differences between the schools' outcomes were closely related to their characteristics as social institutions, and that 'associations between school processes and outcomes reflected in part a causal process' (Stoll and Sammons, 2007:209). This led to a flourishing of quantitative research within the area of SE and mostly qualitative research within the field of school improvement. This mixed method research – in the context of SE studies – was meant to collect, quantify and interpret data relating to student attainment and the pivotal role of schools, and then to focus on school improvement processes through case studies and qualitative action research.

3.2.2. Stage Two – Mid-1980s to Mid-1990s

During this period, the research on effective schools took a new turn and began to use multilevel methodologies (Goldstein, 1995) and methodologically complicated studies to illustrate the scientific properties of school effects. These methodologies focused on areas such as the steadiness of school effects over time, the constancy of school effects upon different outcome domains, the impact on students with different background characteristics, the size of school effects and the long term effects of schools (Reezigt et al., 1999; Hox and De Leeuw, 2003).

In the early to mid-1990s, the research on effective schools attempted to explore the reasons why different schools had different effects. It was recognised that much more research based on empirical data was required, rather than studies that analysed the results of previous research data. In response, in 1990 the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) was created, which helped generate a considerable body of empirical research that used significantly improved theoretical and methodological approaches; this provided enhanced data from which to draw conclusions. The most significant work here was in the Louisiana SE Studies of Teddlie and Stringfield (1993) in the United States, and work in the United Kingdom into subject department effects upon performance and also upon school effects (Sammons et al., 1997). We can therefore conclude that by this stage 'school effective research had indeed come of age' (Creemers and Scheerens, 1989:689). These years also saw a number of influential reviews of the field by researchers such as Bosker and Scheerens (1997) and Reynolds et al.

(1996). In addition, it was argued that over the previous 20 years several models of effectiveness had emerged which showed clear progression within the SE and school improvement knowledge base which could, in turn, improve the usefulness of the data collected and, therefore, the analyses that could then occur (Reynolds et al., 2014).

3.2.3. Stage Three – Mid 1990s Onwards

SE studies at this stage witnessed two important changes. The first was a focus on contextual distinction (Potter et al., 2002) and the multi-levels of effectiveness measures (Creemers and Kyriakides, 2008). The second important development saw the merger of two previously distinct lines of inquiry, namely the SE and school improvement research areas.

Compared with the two previous stages, the general orientation was to empirically reconsider and rethink the impact of school on students' achievements by using multi-level analyses in which various factors and models contribute to paint an image of educational effectiveness. Within this perspective, Creemers et al. (2010) distinguished four sequential phases addressing different research questions between the 1980s and 2010. The first phase focussed on the size of school effects where the ultimate purpose was to show, unlike the orientation of the Coleman Report, that school really mattered and that effective schools and teachers were conducive to improved student outcomes. The second phase laid the foundation for a focus on the characteristics/correlates of effectiveness as well as a search for factors associated with improved student outcomes. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, lists of factors were generated with which to analyse the characteristics of effective teachers and schools.

The third phase, according to Creemers et al. (2010), was the era of modelling educational effectiveness by the development of theoretical models showing why specific factors are important in explaining variation in student outcomes. These models underpinned the design of empirical studies within this field from the late 1990s to the early 2000s. Finally, the fourth sequential phase involved a clear focus on complexity 'with a more detailed analysis of the complex nature of educational effectiveness that developed further links with the study of school improvement' (Creemers et al., 2010:6).

What is noticeable about the four phases depicted so far is that, according to these authors, there has been a systematic shift in the research methodology from earlier studies (during phase one) to cohort studies (phases two and three) and most recently to longitudinal and experimental studies (phases three and four). The theoretical and methodological basis for the current study draws upon elements from all four phases, in that it combines elements of case study, cohort studies and an experimental approach.

3.3. International Case Studies on School Effectiveness

The educational effectiveness investigation of the contextual variation and the need for elements to reflect differences across contexts and even within contexts also made the debate far more international (Townsend, 2007b). For example, a number of studies conducted by Wimpelberg et al. (1989), Teddlie and Stringfield (1993), Van der Slik et al. (2006) and Van Damme et al. (2010) examined the effects of different socio-economic contexts, urban/rural differences and governance factors such as public/private schools, as well as the social justice implications of school improvement (Kyriakides, 2007).

Public schools potentially contribute to the building of students' knowledge and skills, upon which their future and that of their countries depend. However, in some countries, such as the US, one-third of all high school students do not complete their study on time (Hall, 2005:1). According to Barton (2004) and Friedman (2005), out of 100 freshmen students entering high school, only 67 will graduate four years later. Despite this, all schools in the US are required to provide graduation data in a way that allows comparisons between the number of students who complete high school with those who fail, which is subsequently useful for assessing the ongoing improvement process of those schools. However, many schools would prefer not to share such information with the public (Reagle, 2006).

In the past, schools have focused on the mandatory attendance of students, when the real and more significant focus should be on compulsory achievement (Lezotte and Pepperl, 1999). Effective schools are expected to "help produce citizens who can live and work productively in increasingly dynamically complex societies" (Fullan, 1993:4).

3.4. Critique of School Effectiveness Research

SER (School Effectiveness Research) is a matter of vast polemic debate among its critics and defenders, in particular in relation to significant concerns over form, methodology, purpose and utility. Goldstein and Woodhouse (2000: 361) make it clear that ‘if it continues to exist as SE (school effectiveness), if many of its proponents remain superficially defensive and it ignores or fails to understand the warnings of its critics, we have very little optimism that it will survive its present state of adolescent turmoil to emerge into a full maturity’. Hence, what follows is a brief account of the key topics underpinning this debate, which can be summarised as follows:

1. The theoretical framework of SER with its underlying epistemological and methodological assumptions;
2. The problematic social background of research; and
3. The politics of SER and the ‘hidden’ ideological agenda of school effectiveness researchers.

Creemers and Kyriakides (2006) point out the following additional defects within the field:

1. Most studies on educational effectiveness are a theoretical, with a focus on statistical relationships between variables rather than on the generation and testing of theories explaining those relationships; and
2. Most studies on educational effectiveness focus either on language or on mathematics, without examining the school curriculum as a whole.

For its ardent defenders and advocates, SER is a discipline that exhibits the characteristics of a mature normal science as ‘[it] has now reached a central position in educational discourse internationally’ (Reynolds and Teddlie, 2001); more than this, it has become ‘the educational research success story of our time’ (Mortimore, 1998b; Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000; Townsend, Clarke, and Ainscow, 1999 cited in Thrupp 2001b). Slee and Weiner (2001: 83) go further in stating overtly that ‘the invention of school effectiveness as a specific curriculum and pedagogic discourse [...] has captured not only the hearts and minds of a body of educational researchers but also of policy-makers and politicians from different parts of the political spectrum’.

As far as its critics are concerned, SER is a research field with pragmatic ends and generally serves policymakers; it aims to attend to certain phenomena related to school achievement and student performance with no systematic consideration of surrounding socio-economic factors. As such, SER is ideologically-oriented in that it draws on the close bonds that exist between researchers and policymakers, to the point where SER is presumed to serve the interests of these policymakers. In line with this, Luyten et al. (2005: 251) contend that SER ‘is not as much a scientific endeavour as it is an ideological force’ with major theoretical, methodological and ideological shortcomings.

3.4.1 The Theoretical Level

In defence of SER, Reynolds and Teddlie (2001) maintain that what might have upset the critics of SER is the fact that disciplinary advancement has been achieved within the field of school effectiveness thanks to an ‘agreed methodology’, loosely termed positivistic. More than this, they contend that the homogeneity of such a methodological philosophy makes it possible to judge which knowledge is valid and which is invalid.

Nonetheless, for certain critics, the central question within the field of SER remains ‘How robust is our notion of effectiveness?’ (Brown, 1998 cited in Slee and Weiner, 2001: 89), as it is not possible to generalise the results drawn from the research datasets, especially at the international level. In the same vein, SER researchers have been unable to link school effectiveness with school improvement, that is ‘in transforming so-called ‘failing’ or ‘bad’ schools into more ‘effective’ or ‘good’ schools’ (Slee and Weiner, 2001: 87).

With a recurrent focus on the notion of ‘effectiveness’, less attention has been paid in the international literature within the SE field to the concept of ‘ineffectiveness’, partly because of the paucity of studies and the lack of variables and factors by which to analyse relevant datasets. Within this context, Mortimore (1995) called for the production of ‘more variable correlates from which to assert generalizable hypotheses in order to restore common-sense ideas about good practice or ‘effective schooling’.

Some critics also maintain that, despite advancements at the level of research design, sampling and statistical techniques, there remains no systematic and definite set of criteria against which it is possible to measure the effectiveness of schools and the possibility for their improvement. Instead of simplifying and narrowing down the key features of the

discipline for practical and precision purposes, the use of various investigation and data collection tools such as tests, interviews, observation, questionnaires and expert opinions has contributed to the generation of ‘a huge mass of data pointing to perhaps hundreds of specific characteristics associated with school effectiveness’ (Townsend, 1997a: 312).

For the purpose of consistency, SER is in need of a clearly delineated epistemological framework of features and criteria in order to assess and measure the extent to which schools are effective. To do so, Townsend (1997a) stresses the importance of context, the purposeful application of these features and the interplay between them, for the creation of an environment of effectiveness.

4.3.2 The Problematic Social Background of Research

SER critics contend that one of the chief problems associated with the field at the theoretical level is that SER results do not take into consideration the social and political context of schooling, students’ ethnic and gender backgrounds, school composition and the school curriculum. Angus (1993), a proponent of SER, considers factors such as family background and social class to be ‘noise’ whereas SER critics strongly believe that these factors could account for the quality of student performance and school achievement.

In fact, Thrupp (2001b: 17) called upon SE researchers ‘to take on board the sociological and political concerns of its critics’. One of these concerns is to reconsider those social and economic factors that are eschewed or taken-for-granted where, admittedly, they are considered ‘false givens’ by Thrupp (2001b). Family background, for instance, is a socially constructed concept rather than a ‘given’ which ‘can be made worse or better through housing, health, employment and taxation policies, all of which will therefore affect levels of student achievement’ (Thrupp, 2001b: 19). De-emphasising these factors in school effectiveness research is interpreted by SER critics as a biased political and ideological standpoint that serves policymakers’ interests.

4.3.3 The Political and Ideological Dimensions of SER

Thrupp (2001b) stresses the inability of SER to control the political use of its findings. As a consequence, SE researchers are typically accused, one way or another, of ascribing to certain political orientations. For instance, in the late 1990s, SER was accused of supporting neo-liberal school reforms and endorsing right-wing social policies. To

alleviate these claims and allegations, Mortimore and Sammons (1997) pronounced their utter and complete rejection of this accusation and challenged their accusers to either provide evidence for the statement or withdraw it.

Because research within the arena of school effectiveness takes most variables, such as schools, families, leadership and attainment, as more or less constant categories across various contexts, SER is often accused of being ‘monocultural or racist’ (Thrupp, 2001b: 19). It is for this reason that most critics plead for a consideration of social class, social justice or inequality, student composition, disadvantage and ethnic minorities when judging school effectiveness.

Within the same perspective, it is difficult for critics to admit that SE researchers can maintain total integrity and neutrality. Contrary to this, Slee and Weiner (2001) stipulate that ‘School effectiveness research achieved prominence because of its perceived complementarity with the aims and wishes of politicians and bureaucrats’. Therefore, it is fully logical for Goldstein and Woodhouse (2000) to ask for a clear separation of SE research from government influence, since many SE findings will have relevance to government agendas.

All in all, in view of the multilevel and complex nature of effectiveness, the contentious proponent-critic controversy over the array of issues aforementioned is likely to enrich the discipline within the theoretical, methodological and political orientations of the discipline. From a critical perspective, instead of muting critics’ concerns, SER proponents need to acknowledge that ‘these criticisms are just now beginning to gain some momentum’ (Teddle et al., 2000), as they are a step closer to refining SER research. In the same vein, Thrupp (2001a) feels that a possible shift in the nature of SER, whereby SER might implode or evolve ‘—and in what direction—remains to be seen’. Nonetheless, he contends that it is necessary for the present standoff, whereby school effectiveness researchers and their critics mostly ‘agree to disagree’, to be replaced by a continuing process of critique, counter-critique and counter-counter-critique for as long as is necessary to work through the issues.

3.5. Characteristics of School Effectiveness

What makes schools effective? Theoretically, effective public schools can make a difference to achievement for students from various backgrounds, and successful schools have particular characteristics and processes which help all or most children learn to high levels. These characteristics are known as ‘correlates’ because they are associated with student success (Lezotte, 1991; Kirk and Jones, 2004). According to Kirk and Jones (2004), there are seven characteristics/correlates of effective schools: a clear school mission, high expectations for success, instructional leadership, opportunities to learn and time on task, a safe and orderly environment, positive home-school relations and frequent monitoring of student progress.

According to Lezotte (1991) and Haberman (2003), the school mission and vision should be clearly articulated by principals and teachers so that school staff can share a common understanding of and commitment to instructional goals, priorities, assessment procedures and accountability. This view is supported by Cibulka and Nakayama (2000), who believe that teachers should be partners with the principal in creating their school mission and vision, which in turn will help them all to influence students to excel. In other words, to secure the students’ success in the achievement of their learning outcomes, teachers and principals have to cooperate together towards the elaboration of a common mission and the determination of terms through which to implement the school vision. Lezotte (2001:7) believes that effective schools, whose staff members share their mission, vision and high expectations, have ‘the capability to help all students obtain that mastery of learning objectives and goals’. This would also reflect positively on teacher excellence, collaboration and mentoring where every individual, including teachers and students, is recognised as a valuable member with special strengths and with the potential to develop and grow (Johnson, 1997:2).

The principal is expected to be an instructional leader who effectively communicates his/her school mission to all school stakeholders; this is crucial to maintaining SE (Lezotte, 2001:5). The principal in this sense is considered to be ‘a leader of leaders’ who empowers teachers and shares with them decision making in relation to the instructional goals of the school (Lezotte, 1991:3). In order for the principal to be an effective school leader, he/she should have certain critical qualities and characteristics (Johnson, 1997). These qualities include effective administrative leadership, positive expectations, promoting a strong and

integrated curriculum, sharing decision making and accepting campus-wide responsibility for teaching and success.

In order for a school to be considered effective, students have to be offered the opportunity to learn – that is, a safe climate where all work is free of any type of threat. This atmosphere encourages all teachers and students to be productive through a cooperative approach to learning, with respect for diversity and an appreciation for democratic values (Lezotte, 1991; Townsend and MacBeath, 2011; Leithwood and Seashore-Louis, 2011; Dimmock, 2012). This in turn requires an effective teacher leadership that encompasses several variables such as creating energy in the classroom, building capacity, securing the environment, extending the vision, meeting and minimising crisis and seeking and charting improvement (Ngang, 2012:231).

In effective schools, parental involvement plays a pivotal role in the quality of students' achievements. It is regarded as 'the interaction and assistance which parents provide to their children and to their children's schools in order to somehow enhance or benefit their children's success in the classroom' (Blair, 2014:352). Epstein and Connors (1995) postulate that parental involvement is based on six types of conduct:

1. Parent behaviour which creates a positive home learning environment,
2. Parent-school communications,
3. Parent assistance and volunteerism at school,
4. Parent-school communications about home learning activities,
5. Parental involvement in the decision-making processes within the school and
6. Parental access to educational resources in the wider community.

Positive home-school relations encourage children to value education (Goodman, 1997:6). Students' progress in this atmosphere is frequently measured and monitored in order to improve upon desired behaviours and performance. In this context, the use of technology becomes an essential element in assessing student progress. Curricular-based and criterion-referenced measures of student mastery become more useful to student learning than standardised norm-referenced paper-pencil tests (Tinio, 2003). This is true to a certain extent, if educators can follow up on what students achieve and how they achieve it.

These characteristics of effective schools will collectively provide equal opportunities for learning for all students, a greater connection with their families and an improvement in schooling and the professional development of staff. This means that schools with such features are more able to improve individuals, the school community and society as a whole.

3.6. Comparative Analysis of Literature on Effective School Characteristics

Extensive research and scholarly works have identified SE characteristics over the last three decades. In spite of the fact that these characteristics have received significant attention by many scholars in the field, it is difficult to find agreement on either their number or content. The researcher conducted a critical comparison between clusters of these works to explore the features of effective schools (see Appendix B for a full description of this comparison).

For example, Smith and Tomlinson (1990) suggested four characteristics of successful secondary schools while Hopkins (1994) identified a different set of four characteristics. Some evidence from Australia shows that the Australian education system identifies five characteristics of an effective school while Australian school communities recognise six characteristics and identify them as intangible elements of SE (McGaw et al., 1992). Other research has identified seven characteristics of effective schools; for example, the Institute of Public Policy Research (Brighouse and Tomlinson, 1991:5; Kirk and Jones, 2004), as discussed above. Rutter et al. (1979) and the Department of Education and Science (1988) have both identified eight different characteristics of an effective school. Finally, Mortimore et al. (1988a), Mortimore (1991), Alexander et al. (1992) and Sammons (1994) have identified 13 different characteristics as key factors necessary for a school to be deemed effective.

A comparative analysis conducted by the researcher indicates that there are significant variations in the current research identification of effective school characteristics. These variations could be attributed to the cultural background of the researchers involved relating to school reform and educational development in various countries around the world. The notable differences in scholars' views regarding the characteristics of an effective school could also be attributable to the long timespan over which the characteristics were collated. Some of the characteristics were identified in the late 1970s

while others have been identified in the first decade of the twenty-first century. However, it is noted that most of the research and scholarly work involved in identifying the characteristics of an effective school was conducted during a short period in the 1990s.

In order to understand the nature and relevance of the characteristics of effective schools, as identified by scholars in the field, the researcher suggests distributing each feature, characteristic or factor into one of six of the Effective School Domains (ESDs): school factors, leadership factors, teaching and learning factors, student factors, school-home relationship factors and local community factors. This arrangement does not prioritise certain domains or characteristics under investigation according to their relative importance. These domains have been developed from readily recognisable and accepted factors discussed throughout the literature as key elements in effective schools, through which to understand and measure school specific elements.

Additionally, for a closer focus on SE in the UAE, as the prime research objective of the present thesis, the researcher intends to elucidate upon the nature and relevance of the characteristics of effective schools within this context. She will do this by drawing on her extensive experience and knowledge of the school system in Abu Dhabi where she worked as a teacher for almost five years prior to becoming a full-time employee in the training education centre, which is responsible for training all school staff, principals, teachers and supervisors in the Abu Dhabi Education Council. As such, the researcher considers herself to have been fully immersed within teaching, learning and leadership programmes in Abu Dhabi for the past 13 years.

It was also expected that the research itself would determine contextually situated elements that were important for student achievement. For the purpose of this research, ten key elements have been selected to reflect those elements that are most consistently determined as appropriate in the various studies, and those that the ISERP has shown to be applicable across contexts. The inclusion of a further six elements has also taken into account those elements that the researcher regards as contextually specific to the research site in the UAE. The 12 elements used in the initial phase of this research project are listed in Table 3.1.

Table 3 1 Key Elements Chosen For Use in this Research

1	The main elements
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. School factors2. Leadership and management factors3. Teaching and learning skills4. Engagement of students5. School-home relationship factors6. Parental and community involvement
2	Sub-divided and including all schooling components
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Safe and supportive environment for all2. High and appropriate expectations of all3. Regular monitoring of student progress4. Positive school culture5. Development of staff skills6. Communications skills

A close examination of this list will show that it illustrates many of the factors that have been shown to be important through various studies discussed in the literature review. The themes chosen have all been adapted from the wide range of studies found throughout the research and often reflect the combined views of many scholars.

Table 3.1 above shows the six main characteristics of an effective school. Where some of these domains are subdivided into sub-domains, each [sub-domain] indicates which scholarly work in the field exhibits the relevant characteristic(s), factor(s) or feature(s). These domains are school factors, teaching and learning factors, school leadership and management qualities or factors, student factors, school-home relationship factors and local community factors. There are overlapping areas between the domains of a school which cannot be separated when placing them into the six main categories: school vision and mission, school academic expectations and standards, school curriculum and resources, assessment and feedback, and school environment. Figure 3.1 illustrates these factors and how they inter-connect. These recognisable and accepted factors are discussed throughout the literature as key elements of effective schools and are used to understand and measure school-specific elements.

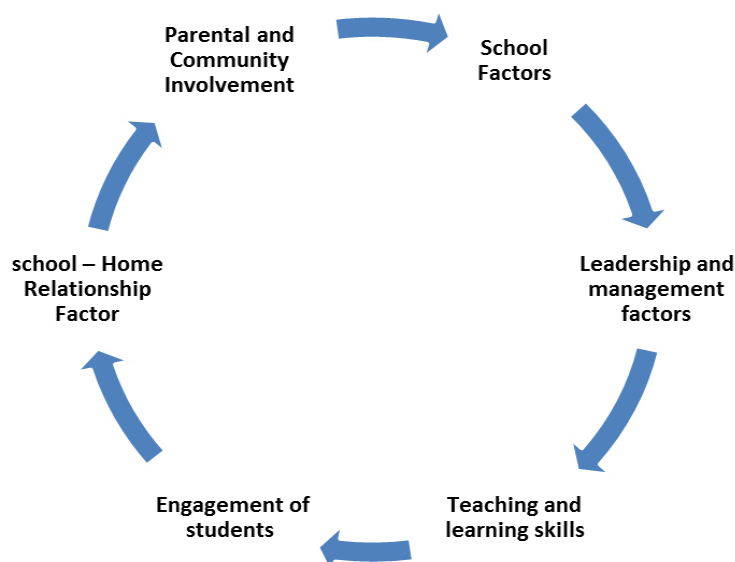


Figure 3 1 Comparative analysis of literature on effective school characteristics (by researcher)

3.6.1. School Factors

A comparative analysis conducted by the researcher reveals that, for the ‘school factors’ category, the school mission and vision were emphasised as important features of effective schools in only five pieces of research, namely: Rutter et al., 1979; the Department of Education and Science, 1988; the Institute of Public Policy Research in Brighouse and Tomlinson, 1991; Hopkins, 1994 and Kirk and Jones, 2004. This may be a natural result as most research focuses on student learning and outcomes rather than on the strategic planning of schools. This could also be due to the fact that many public schools are used to government-made decisions rather than self-planning. The school academic expectations category was emphasised by only four works out of 12 (Rutter et al., 1979; the Department of Education and Science, 1988; the Institute of Public Policy Research in Brighouse and Tomlinson, 1991; Kirk and Jones, 2004). This low emphasis on the importance of academic expectations for effective schools by many related works may also be attributed to the reasons associated with the school mission category.

The UK Department of Education and Science (1988) was one of the very few sources to highlight the importance of curriculum and resources for effective schools. This may be attributed to the central planning of the national curriculum in public schools in general and to the public funding of resources. The school environment or classroom environment has received much attention in related literature (Rutter et al., 1979; the Department of Education and Science, 1988; Mortimore et al., 1988a; Smith and Tomlinson, 1990;

Mortimore, 1991; the Institute of Public Policy Research in Brighouse and Tomlinson, 1991; Alexander et al., 1992; Sammons, 1994; Kirk and Jones, 2004). These studies asserted that a safe and orderly environment contributes significantly to the progress of learning. These trends reflect the emphasis of the literature on student outcomes as the core work of effective schools, rather than on other important elements of effectiveness such as the ongoing professional development of staff and so on.

It has been assumed that the key characteristics of effective schools were demonstrated in two important studies conducted by Levine and Lezotte (1990) in the US and Sammons et al. (1995) on behalf of the English Schools Inspectorate (OFSTED) in the UK. Among the common characteristics in the studies was a greater trend towards the focus on whole school aspects and processes including professional leadership, teaching and learning, shared vision and goals, purposeful teaching, high expectations, learning communities, accountability and effective evaluation and monitoring, and parental involvement.

In addition to the studies described above, other studies have also placed an emphasis on accountability as this clearly reflects a commitment to quality in education. Other studies, such as the Australian overview (Domitrovich and Greenberg, 2000), have reported various criteria that have been identified as important in the development of an effective school. Although the criteria reinforce characteristics that have already been identified in several studies, three interesting additional features include available support services such as health care and food, adequate facilities (taking into consideration space, classroom dimensions and technology) and continuous staff development. Another study of effective schools (Barber et al., 1995) emphasised similar characteristics, such as school leadership, teachers and parents. However, this study confirmed positive reinforcement as a further feature of effective schools.

3.6.2. Leadership and Management Factors

School leadership and management are considered one of the most important factors in the fabric of effective schools (Department of Education and Science, 1988; Smith and Tomlinson, 1990; Kirk and Jones, 2004; Matthews and Sammons, 2004; Mulford et al., 2004). Leithwood and Riehl (2003) produced a useful summary report in which they outlined a core set of functions of leaders that are considered valuable in almost all educational contexts. This core set of functions includes setting directions, developing

people and developing the organisation. Moreover, drawing on research commissioned by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in England, the core tasks of effective school leadership are to build vision and set directions, monitor pupils' achievements, progress and the quality of teaching, and sustaining school improvement (Southworth, 2010).

Hallinger and Heck (1998) reviewed over 40 empirical studies conducted between 1980 and 1995. They concluded that school principals exercise a small but measurable and statistically significant indirect impact on SE and student achievement. Likewise, Witziers et al. (2003) found that school leadership does have a positive and notable effect on student achievement, and Waters et al. (2004) reported that effective school leadership substantially increases student achievement. In Canada, studies up to the late 1980s focused on three characteristics of effective schools, namely school climate, effective leadership and effective teaching. Effective teaching had also been linked with effective leadership (Sackney, 2007).

Further research in this area shows that effective school leadership, a positive school climate and the presence of positive attitudes among teachers will directly or indirectly influence the school's performance and student achievement (Hallinger and Heck, 1998; Leithwood et al., 2006; Bush, 2007; Robinson et al., 2009; Day et al., 2009).

3.6.3. Teaching and Learning Skills

Teaching and learning domains are the core task of any school (Creemers, 1999). Teachers who possess effective subject and pedagogical knowledge (Department of Education and Science, 1988), who are involved in decision making (Smith and Tomlinson, 1990) and show consistency are intellectually challenging teachers who increase their whole class interactive teaching (Mortimore et al., 1988a; Mortimore, 1991; Alexander et al., 1992; Sammons, 1994; Ko, 2010) and contribute to the effectiveness of their school (Scheerens, 2004). Effective Schools should provide students with an opportunity to learn, focusing on time for learning and remaining on task (Kirk and Jones, 2004), sharing staff-student activities (Rutter et al., 1979; Mortimore et al., 1988a; Mortimore, 1991; Alexander et al., 1992; Sammons, 1994), and having a positive relationship with learning, appropriate value systems and preparation for the next stage of learning (McGaw et al., 1992).

3.6.4. Engagement of Students

Effective schools should also focus on student development by providing students with opportunities to develop their sense of responsibility (Rutter et al., 1979; Hopkins, 1994) and encouraging them to express their views in an atmosphere of positive relationships (Department of Education and Science, 1988). Further, effective schools should ‘develop students’ positive self-concept, self-discipline, self-worth and living skills so that they become a productive and confident member of the adult world’ (McGaw et al., 1992).

Moreover, school-based staff development is essential for schools to function as a learning organisation, this being one of the 11 key characteristics of SE synthesised from reviews on SE Research (Sammons, et al., 1995). In fact, Osberg, Pope and Galloway (2006) found that engaging students in school reform by identifying school problems and designing and implementing reform helps these students become future leaders, as they take responsibility for making changes.

Studies carried out by Kythreotis and Pashiardis (2006) within the context of Cyprus found that the principal’s leadership style had a direct and significant effect on student engagement and achievement. Leithwood and Jantzi surveyed 1,762 teachers and 9,941 students in a Canadian school district (1999) to explore the effects of principal leadership and teacher leadership on student involvement in schools. They found that the principal had a greater effect than teachers on student engagement.

Glover and Law (2004) argued that, to be effective in engaging students in teaching and learning, a school needs to provide a clear vision to encourage students to participate in decision-making, share experiences and maintain a caring culture. They maintained that, in order to be effective, schools must provide the necessary physical and material resources, foster the attitudes of both peers and teachers, and apply rules and regulations that facilitate learning processes (Boud et al., 1996). Torney-Purta (2002) carried out a survey involving 90,000 14 year-old students from 28 countries. The results of the study revealed that having an open classroom climate and giving students the chance to discuss different issues in classrooms raised students’ levels of civic engagement.

The findings from the Louisiana SE Study (Teddle and Stringfield, 1993:132) for low Socio-Economic Status (SES) but effective schools identified pertinent characteristics such

as a stable and shared academic leadership, close relationships and empathy among administrators, and good use of academic staff; in addition, teachers were warm, friendly, cohesive, cooperative and punctual, fostering a positive classroom climate. Students were involved in the running of the school, had excellent discipline and maintained consistently high levels of academic achievement. The study reflected that students played a role in school effectiveness. In addition, complicated processes that needed to be nurtured by the principal and teachers were also identified as being essential to school effectiveness.

3.6.5. School-Home Relationship Factors

Effective schools should also develop positive home-school relations (Kirk and Jones, 2004), positive relationships with the community, concern for students' overall wellbeing, and have effective pastoral systems (Department of Education and Science, 1988) as well as active parental involvement where parents are partners in education (Mortimore et al., 1988a; Mortimore, 1991; Sammons, 1994; Institute of Public Policy Research in Brighouse and Tomlinson, 1991). It is noted that scholars have not emphasised the importance of school relations with parents and the community for SE and this may be due to the focus on inside school factors rather than extraneous factors.

3.6.6. Parental and Community Involvement

Park et al. (2011:5) note that there are two trends in US research on parental involvement, depending on the context in which parents become involved (Downey, 2002; Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996). The first is home-based involvement activities consisting of 'what parents do at home to influence their children's education, including parent-child discussion about school and monitoring children's educational progress and behaviours' and the second is school-based, referring to 'activities in relation to schools such as volunteering at school events, attending a parent-teacher organisation, or contacting teachers and school officials'.

Taking these two dimensions into consideration, parental involvement can develop communication between parents and their children and increase student achievement, attendance and study habits while decreasing the amount of behavioural problems (Gonzalez et al., 2005; MacBeath et al., 2007). A UK study of 50 randomly selected London primary schools involving 2,000 children revealed that, in addition to purposeful leadership and effective teaching, maximum communication between teachers and students, effective record keeping and effective parental involvement were among the

characteristics of effective schools (Mortimore et al., 1988a). Certainly, school and community relationships with parents as key partners can lead to remarkable improvements in student achievement and school quality (Sanders and Lewis, 2005). Based on a national education longitudinal study in the US, Fan (2001) found that parental involvement was comparable across four ethnic groups: Asian Americans, African Americans, Hispanics and Whites. Further, the study confirmed that parents' expectations of their children's education played an important role in students' academic achievement. Therefore, more than 1,000 schools in 100 districts and 17 State Departments of Education in the US are involved in parental and community involvement programmes because of their positive outcomes (Epstein, 2005).

This research has shown that school practices among mainstream school stakeholders (including parents and students) could promote or hinder a successful corporation. In a study by Halsey (2005) of parental involvement in West Texas, he found that teachers, parents and students believed that parental involvement was important in education, but problems arose as a result of unclear roles for parents and ineffective communication and misunderstandings among teachers, parents and students (school-relationship axis). For example, teachers assumed that parents were not interested in school activities and that students did not want their parents to be involved in their education. On the other hand, parents thought that teachers wanted limited participation from parents and students said that they wanted their parents to be involved in school activities. Parents tend to prefer to be involved in schools for reasons other than academic ones and they favour personal communications.

In her study on the factors that influence student achievement in the UAE, Darabool (1994) pointed out that parental involvement, as well as the home environment and family structure, influences student achievement. In fact, parents in the UAE are mostly involved in parenting at home with only a few parents being involved in school activities; most parents who contact teachers to learn how they can help their children at home are parents of elementary students (Al Taneiji, 2008). On the other hand, few teachers communicate with parents to report children's low achievements or their behaviour (Al Taneiji, 2001).

3.7. How do we Use Factors Listed as Contributing to Effective Schools?

The question of whether it is possible to use any list of factors that contribute to effective schools for the purposes of improving the performance of ineffective schools, or making effective schools even more so, is one of the main issues within SE research. Many of the findings of previous research studies have identified that these studies have not paved the way to providing a guaranteed process for creating more efficient and effective schools (Reid, Hopkins and Holly, 1987; Mortimore et al., 1988a; Stoll and Fink, 1992; Sammons, 1994; Townsend, 2007b).

It is imperative to acknowledge the fact that, as they operate from a stand-alone perspective, each school has its own individual contextualised conditions and strives to achieve its own pre-determined vision and objectives. Every school is unique with its own characteristics, which are shaped by a number of factors specific to that school. Factors such as the quality, calibre and number of staff members, location, number and academic level of its pupils, size, resources and national influence, to name but a few, will impact on how the school needs to organise itself on an improvement trajectory. However, these individual characteristics could form the basis of both national and local research, with the characteristics identified being used as an extended general framework.

3.8. School Effectiveness and School Improvement Convergence

As previously noted, the characteristics of effective schools may be considered as a knowledge base and a framework for school development and improvement. The main focus of the current study is clearly on SE per se. This phenomenon is inseparably interrelated with school improvement and cannot be studied in isolation (Townsend, 2007b). According to MacBeath and Mortimore (2001), the preoccupation with SE came into being as a result of inequality in society, which sparked a move towards better education for all.

The literature on SE has a close relationship with that of school improvement, as both processes evidence how well a school is functioning. In terms of school effectiveness, researchers have tried to answer two essential questions, as outlined by Harris (2005), namely ‘What do effective schools look like?’ and ‘How do schools improve and become more effective?’ ‘What’ and ‘how’ are terms which also question the ‘way’ and the ‘process’. Knowing the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ would, of course, contribute to the creation of

a climate of effectiveness in schools but, at the same time, one cannot create a common blueprint for creating an effective school for every country's educational system to follow by simply identifying some of the characteristics of effective schools. However, by identifying some of the answers to these questions, it could be possible to provide a framework within which the various partners of schooling life, i.e. its principal, staff, parents, students and governors can operate (Mortimore & Sammons, 1987). This framework could be effective in the event that the aforementioned partners work collectively to apply these positive and beneficial changes to the school, with strict guidelines and objectives to measure its success. Within this context, Lezotte (1989:824) made it clear that 'the story of the effective schools movement is one of expanding organisation and evolving enthusiasm from local, to district, to state, to national and now international levels. It seems clear that quality and equity for all our schools is a vision within our grasp'.

This being so, research into all areas of education must reflect the vital ongoing need to develop and improve all these areas. Any failings in schools and the delivery of education must be highlighted and addressed. Necessary changes that are required to make schools more effective have to be introduced. Hence, to initiate a school improvement process 'heads and staff need to review the school's strengths and weaknesses on each of the SE factors in order to establish priorities for the school development plan' (Weindling, 1994:157). Schools that are focused on improving the educational outcomes and life chances of their students must be realistic about what can be expected with regard to school improvement. Further, the importance of context-specific improvement approaches must be recognised (Harris and Chapman, 2002).

3.9. Issues Associated with School Effectiveness and School Improvement

The reform agenda gripped the attention of policy-makers, practitioners, researchers and scholars for much of the 1990s, and this focus has continued into the new millennium. The focus on student achievement and school processes suggests that the effectiveness of schooling 'intake' is not important for the total effectiveness of the school, which leads to an emphasis on the differential effects of schools as the basic measure of effectiveness (Teddle and Reynolds, 2000:15).

The SE research movement was launched in response to the intriguing question of why some schools succeed while others fail. Obviously, some schools are more effective than others but even students from the same schools achieve different outcomes. The SE and school improvement paradigms are affected by several issues. Morley and Rassool (1999:68) highlighted three distinct sequential discourses: organisational system, effective management and the process of change. The organisation of the school often has a bounded structure (centralisation) prescribed by the education authorities. In other words, the effectiveness of the school could be influenced by government evaluation tools such as checklists and inspections, which may not necessarily enhance effectiveness but which seek to measure levels of student attainment. The management of SE is often associated with effective leadership. Bennet et al. (2003) chose to list the main characteristics of an effective principal stating that, as the leader of the school, he or she should:

- Be a knowledgeable teacher
- Be close to children
- Be firm
- Be able to manage all school components including human and financial resources
- Be accountable for the functioning of the school
- Inspire the school community
- Set an example
- Have communication skills and
- Treat everyone equally.

However, the management of the school is also affected by three aspects which are at play, namely styles of leadership, relationship with the school community and the involvement of parents and the school community. The process of change itself also plays a major role. Teddlie and Reynolds (2000:146) consider improvements in schools to be the ‘long-term goal of moving towards the ideal type of the self-renewing school’. So, the level of improvement experienced within schools is dependent upon how well they encourage and promote the spirit of change; change from its existing position to its future state will also be affected by the level of change management within the school and how effectively and efficiently this is implemented.

Educational change is an approach that aims to enhance student learning outcomes and strengthen the school's capacity for managing change (Hopkins 2003:55) as there is an important link between change and school improvement. Hopkins (2001) stated that change plays a major role in school improvement as schools adapt their internal conditions in response to change. It is important at this stage to conceptualise change as a condition for improvement. According to Hopkins (2003), change can bring about improvement if it:

- Is a systematic process
- Focuses on internal conditions
- Accomplishes educational goals
- Enhances a multi-factor perspective (by stakeholders)
- Applies integrated implementation strategies and
- Leads to the institutionalisation of new ideas.

The evidence indicates that change initiated from the bottom up is more sustainable than from the top down, because those for whom the change is intended are involved (Fraser et al., 2006). MacBeath and Mortimore (2001:153-154) suggest that, by developing a guide which gives recommendations on a change process specifically focussing on areas which require enhancement, this may contribute to improvements within schools. However, a major issue was identified by Harris et al. (1997:1) in respect of implementing effective change processes within schools when they highlighted the fact that the political nature of SE is affected by governments which determine how schools should function because of the value-for-money principle, as a considerable amount of investment could have gone into the education budget. Value-for-money concerns in respect of school improvement in developing countries can affect many areas, such as accountability, process, school dependency (centralisation), assessment and evaluation methods, and leadership development, as well as curriculum and school social issues (Townsend, 2012).

Public schools in Abu Dhabi are not-for-profit organisations and are government funded bodies. Hu et al. (2009) point out that 'government funded schools do not have any motivation to cost accounting and cost minimization'. However, the schools' outcomes are not up to the required levels to graduate 'well' qualified students for university (NQA, 2011). If resource optimisation is important, schools should change their policies on the utilisation of these resources. On the other hand, with regard to student outcomes, schools

are assumed to do more to raise standards and expectations (O'Shea, 2005). As a matter of fact, each school has a different reality of school life, the way of processing its work and its orientation to learning. This is part of any school culture, which could be defined as the assumptions and beliefs shared by a school's members operating purposely in defining the organisation's view of itself and its environment (Schein, 1995 cited in MacBeath and Mortimore, 2001).

Leadership is constructed within a social milieu of multiple overlapping and constantly shifting contextual factors along with cultural, political, historical and economic influences (Walker and Dimmock, 2005). So, it is the most decisive function of leaders to create organisational cultures, and when necessary change the organisational work culture. A close examination of the relationship between culture and leadership reveals that they are two sides of the same coin and neither can be really understood in isolation. In fact, there is an emerging philosophy in leadership research which posits that the real and most important role of a leader is to create and manage a workplace culture. Therefore, in order to excel at work, a leader needs to possess the unique talent and ability to manage workplace culture(s).

Beyond organisational culture, societal culture also determines how organisations such as schools are administered. For example, it is reported that school leadership in UAE schools is influenced by 'Arab cultural' orientation towards the exercise of authority and power, kindness to the elderly and mercy to the young, which are common values of both the Islamic and Arabic cultures. So, principals tend to spell out these values through the 'parents' board' as part of the decision making processes relevant to school life and management.

This implies that, for a school leadership to be effective, it must be able to build a culture that supports the achievement of the desired goals. Hubbard et al. (2006:7) maintain that 'every school has its own culture that is socially constructed by the members within it' and that this organisational culture can have the following three dimensions:

- Individuals' use of everyday routines to handle the complexity of organisational decision making

- Conflicts that arise over differences in individuals' values, beliefs and taken-for-granted, often unstated, assumptions about the contentious issues that arise in educational reform efforts
- Political forces that shape organisations and influence their attempts at change.

This can be realised if the leader is aware of the societal cultural landscape in which the school is located. Similarly, leadership training and development programmes need to be inclusive and the school leader should ensure that they emphasise the importance of both the organisational and societal culture as a way of fostering effective school leadership. In other words, 'developing a team approach to principals' leadership development demanded that attention be paid to institutional culture and the micropolitics of status arrangements' (Hubbard et al., 2006:178).

All of these issues surrounding school improvement and SE in the UAE context play an important role. As such, ADEC has established a strategic plan within the new policies to reform school systems, which spans from 2009 to 2018 (see ADEC Strategic Plan, Appendix C). ADEC has also created 'Professional Standards for Principals and Teachers' guidelines. These professional standards are statements of the professional attributes, professional knowledge and understanding, and professional skills required of teachers and principals. The standards provide clarity about the levels of performance required and are based on international best practice (ADEC, Website).

However, for the purposes of this study, an 'ineffective school' will be assumed to mean the status whereby a school is not functioning properly and where the students have not achieved the expected level of attainment, despite the fact that the school has in place all the resources and conditions necessary for it to be operating as an effective school.

3.10. How to Measure School Effectiveness?

There are many different views around how to measure SE. When reading any of the current press within the Arabian Gulf region and comparing it with other regions throughout the world, higher test scores consistently dominate public opinion. Therefore, governments formulate their responses by creating policies and strategic plans that guide the attention of their population to these. While academic success is an essential and fundamental part of schooling, it is not the only feature necessary for the development of good and active citizens.

Although the literature identifies certain elements as being universally important to effective and improving schools, identifying those elements that are essential for measuring effective schools is not an easy task. However, while student attainment level is a popular method used to evaluate school effectiveness, several studies present a variety of approaches and different criteria for the evaluation of school effectiveness. Sammons (1999) highlights the following as important features in evaluating the effectiveness of a school:

- Student attainment
- High-quality teaching
- Positive interpersonal relationships
- Good student attendance
- Good discipline
- Good planning, presentation and assessment of academic work
- Positive school climate
- Provision of extracurricular activities
- Clear vision and goals
- High expectation by all school's stakeholders
- Home-school relationship and
- School involvement with local community activities.

The above indicators seem to target different areas in the functioning of a school which, when properly managed, enhance the effectiveness of the school. The areas seem to be centred on teaching, learning and the behaviour of students, teachers and parents in respect of the functioning of the school.

A comparison of the previously mentioned criteria for evaluating and enhancing the level of SE with those that hamper SE suggests that the absence of even one factor can create a barrier to school effectiveness. Although it seems important to consider the factors contributing to or acting as barriers to school effectiveness, it is important to bear in mind, as Angus (1993:340) indicates, that SE is a continual process and is never static. He describes the effective school as a 'learning organisation' which means there is an ongoing

attempt by the school to improve its performance by learning the strategies, values and contexts of its environment in order to enhance effectiveness (Silins et al., 2002; Silins and Mulford, 2004).

When considering the above mentioned views around evaluating school effectiveness, the expectations of all stakeholders or interest groups should be taken into account. The expectations of school stakeholders vary from country to country and just as much from locality to locality. This seems to suggest that what is wanted by communities and what is promoted by governments and Ministries might be different things. However, when contextualised and conceptualised, it could be argued that the school community's views should be taken into account during the process of shaping schooling outcomes and school policies (Fraser et al., 2006).

The criteria for evaluating SE are usually determined by how these have been conceptualised by those assessing it. In UAE government schools, school inspections were and still possibly are the most common method used. The inspectorate is considered to have several advantages (Wilcox and Gray, 1994), such as:

- Setting standards for teaching and learning processes
- Ensuring curriculum unity
- Enforcing equal assessment and evaluation methods and
- Putting pressure on schools to perform.

However, the inspectorate caused problems by: (a) generating unnecessary stress, (b) limiting innovation, and (c) constraining pedagogical strategies (Wilcox and Gray, 1994). While the history of SE cannot be divorced from the notion of inspection, there is widespread opposition to the policies and practices of the inspectorate and even to its alternative ways of evaluating school effectiveness. For example, Reynolds and Cuttance (1992) state three levels at which student performance could reflect how effective a school is:

- **Standard model:** The school usually sets its own standards of performance. However, there could be a national curriculum requirement for particular standards to be met, and comparing the performance of students to that of students in other

schools could determine to what extent students are meeting the set national standards.

- **School-level intake:** At the level of the school, individual student attainments could be compared to those of other students in the school to indicate how well an individual is meeting the school's standard of performance.
- **Student level:** Student attainment could also be evaluated by how well the student meets the typical end-product requirement of the school as a typical graduate.

Additionally, Cuttance (1998) suggests referring to a Quality Assurance Framework to measure and enhance school effectiveness. Quality assurance is characterised by stages of performance-development cycles whereby the school is left alone for a specified period. Then a review (to evaluate the state of effectiveness) is conducted according to the level of school development at a specific stage.

In developing countries, the 'decided' work structure within institutions and organisations, whether political, social or labour market, under the umbrella of government, plays a serious role in shaping public policy. Appraising schools tends to be based on 'imitating' global norms and practices, with only a limited consideration or in-depth investigation of the national and local educational and development needs. It is notable that the measures of SE and school improvement are 'products' of the learning process in developed countries, which can differ from developing countries. It could be argued that developed countries' measures of SE are more 'welfare' based due to the progression of urbanisation. While we find the opposite is true in third world countries, whether they are rich or poor, we can trace this to the fact that these countries are adopting the 'ready box delivery' to catch up with developed countries. It could be argued that it is inappropriate to measure effective schools in developing countries in the same way as in more developed countries.

Substantial progress has been made since the early five factor model of school effectiveness, measuring leadership, instructional focus, climate conducive to learning, high expectations and consistent measurement of pupil achievement (Townsend, 2007b). It is now commonplace to acknowledge that the effectiveness of any school must be considered within the context in which it operates, rather than simply in terms of the 'ingredients' that help make up the school operations (Townsend, 2007b:4).

The survey developed and used in this research measures those elements considered throughout the literature to be appropriate across contexts, as well as those that might be context specific.

This study, with its limitations to the UAE context and its education system, aims to unpack stakeholders' perceptions relevant to the characteristics of effective schools in the UAE and in relation to whether or not they perceive UAE secondary schools to be effective. In addition, consideration is given to how strategies for effective schools might be developed, improved and made more effective. The study will consider the concept of SE within the UAE context, and policies for evaluating principal, teacher and SE will be discussed in the following sections in relation to how they influence SE and school improvement. This is followed by a brief critique of their efficacy in terms of school-effectiveness and school-improvement strategies.

3.11. Effective Schools in the UAE

Recent work has been conducted by Ibrahim and Al Taneiji (2013) to investigate the relationship between school performance and the principal's leadership style in Dubai schools. Data on school performance were obtained from the findings of school assessments conducted by the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB). The researchers indicate that the idea of monitoring and assessing performance in Dubai schools began with the Dubai Education Council in 2005 before the creation of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) one year later. According to Ibrahim and Al Taneiji (2013), a framework for inspecting schools was developed during a series of pilot inspections in April 2008 to inspect 189 schools out of 220 schools in Dubai. Schools were then classified over four categories: unsatisfactory, acceptable, good and outstanding (DSIB, 2009). The second inspection was conducted in 2009 using a similar inspection framework and assessed six areas: engaging and motivating students, teaching for effective learning, assessing student achievement in key subjects, supporting and caring for students, leading schools to improve student learning, and working together to improve schools (DSIB, 2010:10-11).

In the third annual inspection, the framework was developed to include seven areas: student attainment and progress, student personal and social development, teaching and learning, curriculum, protecting and supporting students, leadership and management, and

the school's overall performance (DSIB, 2011). According to Ibrahim and Al Taneiji (2013), this final assessment was the only detailed report, which classified schools based on a four-point scale of unsatisfactory, acceptable, good and outstanding.

Recently, ADEC launched the “Irtiq’a” programme to assure the quality of education in public and private schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (ADEC, Website). Irtiq’a inspection is designed to act as a support for improvements in each school in Abu Dhabi and to maximise resources for school leaders by undertaking a process of self-evaluation to identify what the school does well and what it can do to improve. The inspectors (most of whom were attracted from developed countries) periodically review the quality and performance of each school and evaluate the effectiveness of its self-evaluation.

ADEC has also established the Professional Standards for Principals and Teachers. These professional standards are statements of the professional attributes, professional knowledge and understanding, and professional skills required of teachers and principals. The standards had been developed using international best practice (ADEC, Website).

Principals are responsible for the performance evaluation process of teachers and faculty heads in schools. Teachers are mostly evaluated on the evidence of their classroom performance. A post-observation conference is organised and all 18 indicators are used against four standards at five performance levels, as below:

- 1) **Pre-Foundation:** This is where the teacher is not meeting the performance indicators or is meeting them at only a basic level. Teachers performing at this level need to be supported to improve their performance immediately by following a documented Performance Development Plan.
- 2) **Foundation:** This is performance operating at a satisfactory level, where the teacher is partially meeting some of the performance indicators; however, it indicates areas for immediate improvement in performance, for the best interests of the students.
- 3) **Emerging:** This is a good level of performance, although the teacher is made aware of areas in which performance could be improved. Teachers on this level will usually be personally responsible for developing performance to the next level.
- 4) **Established:** This is a very good level of performance where the teacher is consistently meeting most performance indicators to a high level.

- 5) **Accomplished:** This is performance at an internationally recognised excellent level and where the teacher is consistently meeting most performance indicators to a very high level.

Based on the performance level, the principal provides formative feedback to the teacher. The school principal, along with the Head of the Faculty, works with each teacher to set goals for the year and to create an Individual Performance Development Plan. Individual Performance Development Plans specify how teachers can improve their delivery of instruction relative to the Professional Standards for Teachers. Teachers in Cycle 2 (grades 6 to 9) and Cycle 3 (grades 10 to 12) schools develop Individual Performance Development Plans that are based both on regular self-assessment and classroom observations, conducted by principals and vice-principals (ADEC, Website).

These initiatives, inspired by Western standards, are subject to the same administrative and legal accountability procedures as applied in the international context. In the event that schools do not comply with the correct guidelines, they are subjected to independent inspection by bodies such as OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education in the UK) or the Education Department's Accountability Section. Nevertheless, despite the initiatives, plans and projects dealing with modernisation and improvement in school contexts in the UAE in general, there is still a scarcity of official data on the definition of an effective school in the UAE.

It can be understood that there are some similarities between the above-mentioned international views regarding the characteristics of effective schools and their counterparts in the UAE context. However, we can conclude that both international and local views emphasise the importance of a school's overall performance, curriculum, leadership and management, teaching and learning outcomes, and student factors. However, the local perspective of an effective school does not consider the importance of parental involvement in schooling, community partnership, or the school vision and mission.

An effective school has been viewed differently by local and regional scholars. For example, Barkley (2010) believes that effective schools are linked directly to effective education and that factors of effective schools which make a difference in their mission are related to a group of principles, including:

- The learning time which represents the length of school day, the academic year, the amount of homework and the student attendance policy.
- Motivation: effective schools offer a challenging curriculum with meaningful goals for both teachers and students.
- Learning for mastering: effective schools raise clear, reasonable and high expectations for success along with clear standards to be achieved.
- Focus on literacy: effective schools should emphasise the students' need to acquire literacy skills of various types along with research, critical thinking and higher order thinking skills.
- Lesson planning: effective schools emphasise the planning of teaching and learning, which creates an environment of creativity.
- Environment: effective schools offer safe and orderly environments inside and outside the classroom for all students.
- Collaborative learning: effective schools offer opportunities for all students to cooperate with each other and with the school staff so that the learning process can maximise the outcomes.
- Education technology: effective schools provide students with most modern technologies, especially learning with the assistance of computers and internet access.
- Parental involvement: effective schools share their vision, mission, planning and outcomes with parents.

Effective schooling in the UAE cannot be isolated from the regional context and, in particular, the Egyptian and Jordanian context, because many of the educators working in the UAE Ministry of Education, whether at senior leadership level or school level, are Arab migrants. For example, the Egyptian Document for Effective School Standards (EDESS, 2007:86-87) covers nine domains associated with school effectiveness, as follows:

1. School vision and mission:

- a. An Effective School vision should be clear and should identify its future aspirations clearly.
- b. An Effective School should have a clear mission that identifies the methods by which its mission will be achieved.

2. Student factors:

- a. An Effective School should develop students' knowledge and skills in basic sciences and arts, as well as their critical thinking and problem solving skills.

- b. An Effective School should develop students' living skills.
- c. An Effective School should promote students' sense of positive citizenship.

3. Learning community factors:

- a. An Effective School emphasises student-centred activities.
- b. An Effective School should employ comprehensive and continuous evaluation.
- c. An Effective School provides all students with equal and fair learning activities and provides special needs students with the necessary support.
- d. An Effective School should provide a supportive professional, moral and social environment for teachers.

4. Effective school leadership:

- a. An Effective School should be directed by effective leadership.
- b. Effective School leadership should provide a supportive creative environment that will enhance educational change.
- c. Effective School leadership should support active learning and teaching.
- d. Effective School leadership should support the positive values of school.

5. Sustained professional development:

An Effective School provides an environment of self-evaluation of professional performance and development.

6. Community partnership:

- a. An Effective School mutually exchanges partnership with the local community.
- b. An Effective School provides educational media that is linked with the local community.

7. Information and communication technology:

- a. An Effective School provides the infrastructure for information and communication technology (ICT).
- b. An Effective School employs ICT in its daily work.
- c. An Effective School employs ICT in teaching and learning.

8. Focus on quality and accountability:

- a. An Effective School quality and training unit does its job effectively in following up and evaluation.
- b. An Effective School applies accountability systems and their mechanisms.
- c. An Effective School applies self-evaluation.
- d. An Effective School provides a self-improvement plan.
- e. An Effective School fulfils the requirements of internal and external competence.

9. Optimal use of school building:

- a. An Effective School deals with surrounding dangers effectively.
- b. An Effective School provides safe and secure healthy conditions.

Such a regional perspective on effective schools bridges the gap between the local and international context on the most important features of effective schools. For example, although the domains of parental involvement, community partnership and school vision have not been addressed in the local context, they are emphasised in both the regional and international perspectives. This means that, in order for local UAE schools to be as effective as possible, they should develop their vision, mission and parental and community participation in their education plan for change. For this reason, this study will investigate SE in the UAE from the perspective of stakeholders, taking into account the domains of effective school characteristics mentioned in the international literature, along with the regional perspective.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter presents a literature review of school effectiveness. It has sought to illustrate the complexity of SE in terms of conceptual frameworks, inner factors and characteristics, and its relationship with various issues within the field of School Effectiveness, drawing on the existing research base of knowledge. Chapter Four lays the groundwork for a discussion of educational school leadership in connection with common issues that underpin much of the research, such as the conceptual framework, types, qualities and practices of school leaders. These controversial issues will be reviewed both in the international context and the context of the UAE. The researcher will use a framework based on a series of models of educational leadership (Chapter Four) in order to assess the current approach to leadership in the UAE (as presented in policy documents and the views of respondents), and to frame some of her subsequent conclusions and recommendations in Chapter Eight.

CHAPTER FOUR: EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the literature on the concepts of leadership and management. It examines the definitions, characteristics and models relevant to school management and their implications for the role of school leaders (particularly principals) with respect to offering effective school leadership. Additionally, it examines the importance and impact of professional development on leadership training and professional development for school principals. Finally, this chapter will provide a summary of major issues related to the work of school principals.

This research focuses on the management of secondary schools, where the principal in charge of school administration is considered the most important and influential individual in the management of the school. It is the principal's leadership attributes that determine the school's tone, learning environment, work ethic and professionalism, teachers' morale and the teachers' degree of interest in student outcomes. Leadership quality plays an important role in the effectiveness of a school (Mulford, 2003; Pont et al., 2008; Huber and Muijs, 2010; Darling-Hammond and Rothman, 2011; Hallinger and Huber, 2012). Effective school leadership that emphasises greater teamwork and collaboration among teachers promotes the significant realisation of such internationally accepted school benchmarks as a shared vision, mission and goals.

Therefore, this study will explore the qualities of an effective school leader, perceived by school stakeholders as being vital to fostering enhanced student outcomes and school performance. Although the role of a school principal is omnipresent across all learning contexts, the circumstances and manner in which the principal relates to the school's stakeholders has an impact on the school's effectiveness in realising its objectives. Compared to the practice in Western Europe and North America, a review of literature in this field has established that this subject has not been exhaustively researched in the Arab world, especially with regard to school principals in the Gulf region. In the UAE, it is widely held that a school principal's leadership has an important impact on the school's academic performance and management effectiveness in realising the school's mission, goals and strategic objectives. However, these assumptions have not been empirically researched and validated prior to this study – this study seeks to fill this gap.

For a considerable period of time, SE research has focussed on establishing the extent to which certain factors contribute to improved student achievement and school performance. Generally, it has been assumed that the existence of effective school leadership, a positive school climate and the presence of positive attitudes among teachers will directly or indirectly influence school performance and student achievement (Hallinger and Heck, 1998; Silins and Mulford, 2002b; Leithwood et al., 2006; Bush, 2007; Day et al., 2009; Robinson et al., 2009). Although in theory there appears to be a direct relationship between effective school leadership and improved school performance, in reality this relationship is complex and unpredictable. According to Cotton (2003), while it is evident that there is a fundamental link between a principal's leadership style and school performance with respect to student achievement, research needs to shed more light on such a triadic nexus to validate the assumption that student attainment could be subject to external factors. Robinson et al. (2008) from New Zealand have conducted a meta-analysis of research to explore the relationship between leadership style and student learning outcomes. The results show that the significant impact of instructional leadership on student outcomes was three to four times that of transformational leadership. This suggests that the closer leaders are to the core business of teaching and learning, the more likely they are to make a difference to students (Robinson et al., 2008). In the following sections, a brief overview of the literature on leadership and management will be discussed with a view to determining how both concepts contribute to school effectiveness.

4.2. The Concept of Leadership

Leadership can be described as the process by which a person influences an individual or group of persons towards goal setting and achievement without force or coercion (Bush and Glover, 2003; Greenberg and Baron, 2003). Leaders achieve organisational objectives through motivating their followers, with whom they share a common passion, vision and direction (Fry, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2008). Consequently, both parties are confident in challenging the status quo as a means of finding efficient and long term remedies to leadership challenges. This is achieved through continuous self-analysis, learning and life experiences. This implies that individuals can improve their leadership skills through professional experience and training.

Many scholars have historically sought to scrutinise the influence of school leadership on students. Interestingly, a majority of these scholars have modelled leadership as an

independent variable or as a key change driver in the effective management of schools. However, other researchers have observed that the effectiveness of school leadership is determined by the organisational setting in which the school operates. Despite differences in perception, it has been concluded that, as an independent variable, leadership explicitly or more implicitly drives change and efficiency in the management of schools (Hallinger and Heck, 2010).

4.3. The Concept of Management

It is commonly held that ‘management entails getting things done through others’ (McNamara, 2008). Additionally, management can be described as the process of making sure that targeted organisational goals are achieved. It is the concept within which leadership and management are subsumed – thus, it is not an end in itself (Donald et al., 2004). The central aim of the positive management of schools is to promote quality education through effective teaching and learning. Thus, with regard to the provision of education, the ultimate task of a school manager is to create favourable conditions for both teachers and students to optimise teaching and learning, respectively. Therefore, the extent to which learning and teaching are optimised forms the basis against which the quality of school management can be judged (Bush, 2007). Consequently, it is necessary to examine the interrelationship between leadership and management as this will clarify the degree to which both concepts affect the effective administration of a typical school.

Managers can be described as people who get work done through other individuals in order to effectively and efficiently realise the school’s goals and objectives. They also provide communication channels within or across organisations, act as mediators during negotiations, differences in opinion and conflict resolution, play a key role in the decision making process and are responsible and accountable to all stakeholders.

4.4. The Relationship between Leadership and Management

There has been an ongoing debate on the difference between leadership and management – certain scholars believe that these two terms are distinct and mutually exclusive. Bennis and Nanus (2003:221) stress that while ‘managers are people who do things right, leaders are people who do the right thing’. Accordingly, while leadership relates to ‘mission, direction, [and] inspiration’, on the flipside management involves ‘designing and carrying out plans, getting things done, [and] working effectively with people’ (Fullan, 1991a:158).

Leithwood et al. (2010) contend that, while management refers to maintaining stability, leadership connotes the ability to bring about change or improvement to the organisation. In a related argument, Earley and Weindling (2004) posit that leadership is formative and proactive, and deals with solving problems and the realisation of an organisation's vision, mission, and values; meanwhile, management emphasises the planning, organising, deploying of resources and execution of strategies – that is 'making things happen'. The foregoing analogy is summarised by West-Burnham (1997a) when he presents the differences between leadership and management, as shown in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4 1 Differences between Leadership and Management

Leadership	Management
▪ Vision	▪ Implementation
▪ Strategic issues	▪ Operational issues
▪ Transformation	▪ Transaction
▪ Ends	▪ Means
▪ People	▪ Systems
▪ Doing the Right Thing	▪ Doing Things Right

Although Bolman and Deal (2011) concede that leadership and management are different, they warn that they are equally important. They hold that over-managed but poorly-led organisations tend to lose their sense of spirit or purpose, while having a charismatic leader in a poorly managed organisation can result in temporary gains, only for these positives to fizzle out in the short-term. Therefore, modern organisations need to stand up to this challenge and adopt a model that combines a manager's objective perspective and the brilliance of a wise leader's vision and commitment (Bolman and Deal, 2011: xiii-xiv). In another development, Bell and Bush (2002) regard leadership as an aspect of management. Both terms emphasise the realisation of vision, mission and purpose, and the capacity to inspire others towards achieving a common goal. In essence, operational issues such as budgeting, staffing, teaching, training, learning and stakeholder relationships are incidental or linked to these strategic objectives. The apparent dichotomy is 'false because effective schools require good leadership and good management' (Bell and Bush, 2002:3).

From the above discussion, it is evident that, while leadership is linked to vision, management is perceived to be linked to the daily operations implemented in order to

realise the vision. Hence, it becomes clearer that the distinction between leadership and management is quite arbitrary since in reality the two functions significantly overlap and are usually undertaken by the same people.

This implies that for effective school leadership to be realised, school leaders must have both competent leadership and management qualities. Therefore, both aspects must be accorded equal importance in leadership training and development programmes offered to school principals.

We can also further distinguish between the two concepts – leadership and management – by mentioning the features associated with each of them, as follows.

4.5 Features Associated With the Leadership Concept

Generally, all theories of leadership are based on two important concepts: authority and power. Earley and Weindling (2004:4) note that, for any analysis of leadership to make sense, it has to acknowledge the important interplay between these two fundamental factors, that is, the relationship between leadership, power and authority, as discussed below.

4.5.1 Authority

Every manager, regardless of the positional level, occasionally serves as a leader by ensuring that followers work together to achieve the set objectives of the enterprise (i.e. the school) (Smit et al., 2011:117). Authority refers to the right of a manager to enforce certain actions within specific guidelines or policies and take action against those not willing to cooperate towards the realisation of certain goals. Thus, by inference authority is related to leadership. In a school scenario, as the school's executive officer, the principal is given authority by the Ministry of Education to enforce the delegated authority within the school. Therefore, it is important to establish the difference between authority and power. Many officials have authority (mostly conferred), but lack the power (which has to be acquired) to effectively assert their authority (Gerber et al., 1998). Thus, it may be accurate to conclude that power is the "currency of leadership" (Hackman and Johnson, 1996:137).

4.5.2 Power

In most instances, it is the followers that bestow power onto a leader or manager so that the leader can influence and effectively exercise authority over them – without some sort of power, a leader's effectiveness is significantly jeopardised. In other words, power (i.e. the ability to influence other people's behaviour) has nothing to do with the educational leader's hierarchical position, title or job description within the institution. Power can only be earned by the school leader (Smit et al., 2011).

In the interest of clarity, Northouse (2010) classified power into the following distinct types: (1) legitimate power – referred to as positional power – this is the delegated authority given to a holder of a certain position; (2) power by reward – this is used to give rewards or withhold rewards such as recognition and appreciation, challenge work, and confer post-enrichment and personal development opportunities, merits and promotions; (3) coercive power – this is enforced by instilling fear into followers through psychological or physical means. This form of power should be applied cautiously and selectively depending on the prevailing circumstances, for example during disciplinary interviews, oral and written warnings, reprimands, etc.; (4) referent power – this is rather an abstract concept, otherwise known as personal power. Simply put, followers either will like, respect or just want to identify with the leader; and (5) expert power – this accrues from one's technical expertise and is wielded by the leader over those people in need of knowledge and expertise. Expert power is more relevant in the education sector – for instance, students are dependent on the superior knowledge and experience of their education leaders, including teachers. It is also applicable in other disciplines, for example law (e.g. advocates), accounting (e.g. auditor) and medicine (e.g. doctor). All these professionals are respected for their specialised knowledge or expertise. Teachers may nonetheless be respected by colleagues, the parent-community and students for their noble responsibilities in moulding students, their teaching expertise and their knowledge across various specialties.

In line with the above definitions, leadership can be described as the use of authority and power to achieve certain organisational or group goals, or to initiate change through collective participation by group members or followers as directed, influenced and communicated by the leader. Successful leadership depends on the willingness of energised followers to abide by the leader's commands, or the ability of the leader to

control followers based on influence, power (e.g. knowledge or expertise) and authority. It should be noted that it is not sufficient to just vest certain powers and authority in school leaders. It is important that leaders use their leadership authority and power to ensure that tasks are successfully executed at school and to educate others to understand that it is their responsibility to have these tasks executed. Thus, it is important to create a school environment in which staff actions are determined by a leadership anchored in cordial human relationships, happiness, wellbeing and job satisfaction. Notably, it is imperative that the education leader should maintain a healthy balance between task-oriented and people-oriented leadership styles.

4.5.3. Responsibility

Responsibility refers to the duties of a person in terms of the post and work allocated to an employee. The work need not necessarily be directly carried out by such a person (e.g. the principal) and instead may be delegated to other educational leaders who would then be held responsible for the effective execution of the delegated work. These goals will be realised if it is ensured that teachers are knowledgeable on the subject matter and adequately equipped to undertake the assigned tasks. There is a need to prepare an evidence and standards-based report on the pedagogical skills held by teachers. This acts to demonstrate their capacity and effectiveness in meeting the learning requirements and developmental needs of all students for whom they have been given the responsibility to educate (Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2007). In addition to this, it is important that the principal offers strong instructional guidance. However, for this to translate into substantial but sustained results, the principal's efforts need to be aligned with the relevant curriculum frameworks and supported by teacher development and assessment, and the provision of learning support materials (Darling et al., 2007).

4.5.4. Accountability

Accountability is an essential virtue for any professional working as a school leader in the contemporary work environment. Accountability places a duty or an obligation on a person to act in accordance with a standard or expectation set to gauge the person's performance or behaviour. This necessitates that all persons should be able to account for their actions in line with the set standards or expectations prescribed to be achieved under specific conditions (Grant and Keohane, 2005; Perry and McWilliam, 2007). Teachers in particular are required to be proficient and responsible, and also to make essential professional

judgements in the course of discharging their duties (Kyriakides et al., 2006). Nevertheless, it is expected that teachers should be accountable to their superiors as well as to the parents and their students, in order to ensure full stakeholder participation and a quality delivery of education (Kyriakides et al., 2006).

As a manager, a school principal is duty-bound and has a responsibility to ensure that teachers are continuously trained and developed, to identify and implement relevant and timely strategies, and to procure modern technologies to help in the realisation of the student's instructional desires. Across the world, many countries are implementing measures geared at increasing accountability in the management of local schools for improved student performance. For example, England has developed an elaborate system of "league tables" designed to give parents full information about the performance of local schools (Machin et al., 2013). Although practice varies across the UK, this system has become something of a contentious issue as it 'could lead some schools to teach to the test and push children towards traditional academic pursuits in order to bolster [the schools'] position in rankings' (Gurney-Read, 2015). It is thought that the focus of these league tables is in reality partially restrained to ranking schools in terms of student performance, without revealing too much about the teaching, learning, assessment and management practices of the schools. In the US, the government has legislated a federal law that requires all states to develop an accountability system as per the set general guidelines and also by law prescribes a series of actions to be undertaken by the school management when students fall below a certain level of proficiency in core subjects (Hamilton et al., 2012).

There is an array of evidence on the positive impacts of implementing accountability systems, although this is shrouded with uncertainty since the concept is comparatively new to policy makers. Evidence from the US indicates that the adoption of strong accountability systems leads to enhanced student performance (Hanushek and Raymond, 2005; Jacob, 2005). However, currently there is little evidence about accountability systems in developing countries. This implies that accountability systems have not been widely adopted in these countries and, as such, there is a deficiency in the systematic measurement and reporting of student achievement. As much as these countries have adopted schooling models and performance evaluation standards from Europe and North America, they have failed to implement the corresponding evaluation and accountability systems. This may be attributed to the inadequate planning, implementation and monitoring of the change process. In 1999 and 2001, Fullan held that in the developing world's schools, the process

of transitioning to desirable accountability systems had been derailed by diversity, power relations and the political system. It is evident that the lack of accountability systems at national level has negatively impacted on quality control systems and measures aimed at enhancing efficiency in the delivery of educational services. This appears to be the situation in the UAE – a lack of or deficiency in accountability systems has delayed the realisation of key educational goals or curtailed managerial efficiency and learning at UAE schools, despite the abundant availability of physical, financial and human resources.

Given the above discussion, one could question whether there is actually a need to have a leader or manager in UAE's schools. The greatest challenge facing principals, particularly in high income countries such as the UAE, is the complexity of effectively carrying out both leadership and management functions under a highly centralised education system in which power, authority and resources are administered by centralised authorities. Often, school principals spend a lot of their official time outside the school dealing with the demands (e.g. meetings, responding to queries from district, regional or national headquarters) of centralised bureaucracies. On a typical school working day, school principals are preoccupied with daily operational issues such as handling disciplinary cases involving both teachers and students. School leaders barely have enough time to plan and implement the strategic issues necessary for improved teaching and learning in their schools. Notably, expenditure in most UAE schools is controlled by central government. This makes it difficult for schools to implement their envisaged plans. Under such a top-down centralised hierarchy, the principals' will and ability to effectively exercise their 'leadership' and 'management' responsibilities is highly compromised.

However, if we move beyond these terms, one can look at the tremendous change in educational policies brought about by the adoption of new standards, making education a priority in the government's agenda, the allocation of one third of the government budget to the education sector, and fulfilling the UAE government's desire to modernise the education system. This has added more and new responsibilities to school leaders, resulting in the creation of what might be called an 'indigenous form of educative leadership' (Macpherson et al., 2007:60). The primary task of principals will be helping co-professionals learn how to achieve reform through their practice and through creating continuous professional learning and eventually learning organisations (Senge, 1991).

4.6 Educational Leadership Models

In relation to the general concerns of the current research, the subsequent section lays the ground for the discussion of a typology of leadership models consisting of six paramount styles within the field of educational effectiveness research. The researcher's purpose here is twofold. First, it is important to discern the convergent and divergent qualities of these leadership styles and their impact on SE policy in general, as well as their influence on the school climate, student attainment and stakeholder expectations. Second, there is a need to delineate the characteristics of leadership within the context of the educational management status quo in the UAE and the framework of the current practices of UAE school principals. Gerontopulos (2012:2) maintains that, within an educational system that subdues constant change, 'Leadership is a very prominent topic within the constantly accelerating society, diverse nationalities and increasing attention to education in the UAE'. Hence, this section is designed to provide a general conceptual framework along with a preliminary insight into the paramount leadership style/styles that prevail in the UAE educational system. In light of her multi-levelled experience as a member of ADEC, the researcher hopes to positively contribute to an elucidation of the school leadership landscape, and to suggest elements of change and improvement in order to align principals' practices with the tides of reform within the UAE education system.

Bush (2008) argued that, although the literature on educational leadership features many leadership models, in real practice no single model can be adopted across all school scenarios. Every school has unique needs and a specific reform agenda that cannot be encompassed within a single leadership style. Therefore, school principals are advised to adopt desirable aspects of each leadership style in varying proportions and in accordance with the school context (Bush, 2008). In the past, school principals had a preference for formal leadership models that borrowed heavily from managerial practices. However, recent models include various collegial approaches such as transformational leadership, participative leadership and interpersonal leadership. While political models rely on transactional leadership, emerging models such as postmodern leadership, contingent leadership and moral leadership are also popular in some schools. Notably, the instructional leadership style seems to be gaining most popularity in schools (Bush, 2008).

Leadership is a multidimensional concept where various qualities might criss-cross depending on the nature of the situation. Boonla and Treputtharat (2014:992) opine that

‘Leadership style is a structure of the leader who needs to motivate behaviors as required by various situations which is not a natural behavior’. In the literature on leadership typology, several styles have been pinpointed according to a set of distinctive features. The following section provides a detailed review of six leadership models that seem to be relevant to the school reform context: Managerial, Transformational, Participative, Transactional, Moral and Instructional. Further scrutiny of these dimensions will be provided in Chapter Seven.

4.6.1. Managerial Leadership

Northouse (2010) posits that both management and leadership are applied in influencing people to accomplish goals. However, while management is concerned with administrative duties (e.g. planning, organising and staffing), leadership is a complex process involving multiple dimensions (Northouse, 2010:1). Managerial leadership focuses on the functions, tasks and behaviours of employees, and authority is derived from one’s position within the organisational hierarchy (Bush, 2008). This leadership style is highly bureaucratic and involves supervising, controlling the teachers’ conduct and students’ behaviours, planning, budgeting and oversight of the decision-making process (Bush, 2008). Managerial leadership strength rests in its rigid approach to management and this has proven to be an effective tool in implementing decisions (Bush, 2008).

4.6.2. Transformational Leadership

Since the early 1980s, research has been focused on the ‘transformational leadership’ approach. Transformational leadership is part of the ‘new leadership’ paradigm (Bryman, 1992). This approach focuses on influencing school outcomes rather than directing them, and also seeks to transfer the vision and values of the leader to all members of the organisation (Bush, 2008). Proponents of transformational leadership claim that this leadership style guarantees effective change and reform in the education sector. This is because it focuses on developing the capacity to innovate for all organisational stakeholders (Bush, 2008). Most teachers believe that transformational leadership skills are very important to school principals keen on implementing reform in their institutions (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2006). Transformational leadership is a form of leadership that potentially facilitates staff professional development and guarantees the high level of performance necessary for the implementation of any reform initiative. A transformational leader’s strength rests in the manager’s effectiveness in creating a strong shared vision for

the reform goals, as well as the passion to accomplish a shared vision through building capacity and empowering every member of the organisation (Northouse, 2010).

4.6.3. Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership refers to the bulk of leadership models, which ‘focus on the exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers’ (Northouse, 2010:186). This type of leadership is more political as a leadership model (Northouse, 2010:186). Its position on school development and reform contrasts with the tenets of the transformational leadership style (Miller and Miller, 2001). Avolio and Bass (2001) identified three principles of the transactional leadership model: constructive, active corrective and passive corrective transactions. Through constructive transactions, the leader clarifies task goals, provides necessary materials, and sets clear targets, and rewards upon task completion. The leader is actively engaged in monitoring the correctness of task outcomes and making sure that the set standards are met. However, passive corrective transactions manifest themselves in the form of intervention in the plan of action only when the outcomes are unsatisfactory.

Although some teachers are cognisant of the presence of political models of leadership in schools, the majority are critical of this model. They perceive the transactional leadership model as a bartering process through which school leaders and teachers exchange favours (Lysø et al., 2011). Mostly, leaders use their positional authority to reward and promote teachers who are supportive of their decisions and demands (Bush, 2008). Supporters of the transactional model insist that transactional relationships exist naturally between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2010). They presume that people work better when they expect to be rewarded for their effort and for high achievement. Transactional leadership is highly effective in organisations with well-established reward and penalty systems. Under this model, the application of clear and consistent expectations for every form of behaviour or achievement by a member can efficiently reduce the risk exposure and ensure timely realisation of the expected task outcomes (Northouse, 2010).

4.6.4. Participative Leadership

This leadership model is based on collaboration and interpersonal relationship building. The role of the leader is more facilitative than directive, guiding the conversation and

helping to resolve differences; the leader is responsible for results and the final decisions mostly stem from team recommendations.

This model requires a charismatic leader with highly developed interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence (Bush, 2008). The personal skills of the leader are believed to be key basics to motivate change and reform (Anderson and Anderson, 2010). Hence, this model is less concerned with leaders and their roles and focuses mainly on restructuring the organisation and conveying leadership roles to every member of the organisation (Spillane, 2005).

By conveying leadership roles based on the core structure of the school, the leaders guarantee continuous development and reform through cultivating a sense of ownership (Busher, 2006; HMIE, 2007; Stoll and Temperley, 2010). Naturally, people are likely to commit themselves to the outcomes of their decision when they are involved in the decision making process since they trust their decisions to be correct (Busher, 2006).

4.6.5. Moral Leadership

Moral leadership is motivated by leaders' values and ethics (Leithwood et al., 1999). Many researchers believe that moral leadership should be embraced by educational leaders as school leaders are frequently faced with ethical dilemmas – be it from students, teachers or parents (Greenfield, 2004). It is believed that this model strongly influences the school organisational culture in terms of shared vision, values and symbols (Bush, 2008). Campbell et al. (2003) opine that moral leaders are able to promote equity and cooperation, and to win everybody's commitment towards a shared school vision. However, this leadership model has a weakness in that the leader may exercise unchecked 'ideological control' over school members (Morgan, 1997 cited in Bush, 2007). Supporters of moral leadership emphasise the model's ability to reduce the external pressures associated with reform as it encourages school principals to consider the moral implications of the methods and outcomes of every reform action (Greenfield, 2004). Furthermore, a moral leader has to be morally committed to achieving the expected learning outcomes and to empowering teachers to develop their leadership capabilities.

4.6.6. Instructional Leadership

This leadership model focuses on the purpose of education. Southworth (2002:79) says that ‘instructional leadership [...] is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth’. It gives the school principal an informed insight into the level of teaching and learning in the school and guarantees high student outcomes (Hallinger, 2003; Bush, 2008). Instructional leadership assumes that the school principal is an expert instructor with excellent curricular and pedagogical knowledge (Bush, 2008). Supporters of instructional or pedagogical leadership insist that this model is the most efficient approach to educational reform because it directly increases students’ academic achievement by empowering teachers’ effective teaching practices (Little, 1993; Supovitz and Poglinco, 2001; Earley and Weindling, 2004; Harris and Muijs, 2004).

The significance of this model is reflected in four empirically identified aspects of instructional leadership with direct influence on the quality of teaching and learning, and the resultant improved academic outcomes. First, by involving teachers in discussions on teaching and learning needs, instructional leaders are able to identify teaching and learning deficiencies in a timely way and thus develop appropriate solutions. Second, instructional leaders tend to work directly with teachers in mapping and coordinating the curriculum, thus assisting them in overcoming curriculum challenges. Third, instructional leaders are bound to observe classroom practices. This enables them to provide constructive feedback to teachers on various teaching and learning aspects, as well as suggestions on key areas of mutual development. Fourth, through the regular monitoring and analysis of student progress, instructional leaders contribute significantly to improved school learning outcomes (Robinson, 2007).

4.7 A Comparison of the Six Educational Leadership Models

A close examination of the six educational leadership styles examined in section 4.6 reveals the salient contribution of leaders in the process of school management, change and reform. Hopkins (2001:14) claims that ‘it is now a truism that effective leadership is a cornerstone for successful schooling’. To secure change and reform, school leaders have to cope with constraints related to the system and to the structure’s impositions. Tulowitzki (2013:816) contends that ‘the school leader is seen as working within boundaries stemming from the rules, laws, expectations, resources and so on that could also be referred to as

structure'. It might be said that a bureaucratic and centralised system of education characterised by a top-down process of decision making is likely to give birth to a managerial leadership where the focus 'is more on the daily tasks rather than on people' (Vacar and Miricescu, 2013:432). Transactional leadership, depicted in section 4.6.2., employs authority as a strategy to deal with counterparts in the institutional setting. Transformational and participative leaderships tend to arouse interest and motivation by virtue of their interpersonal skills, their emotional intelligence competences and their ability to influence those around them. Moral leadership might slightly differ from the other styles in that it empowers the individuals within schools or organisations via a clear focus on values and ethos. On the other hand, instructional leadership is thought to be the most suitable style for achieving SE and school improvement in particular. Hopkins (2001:118-119) maintains that the 'Transformational approach to leadership is a necessary but not sufficient condition for authentic school improvement. It lacks a specific orientation towards student learning that is a key feature to this specific approach to school improvement. For this reason the complementary notion of 'instructional leadership' is attractive'.

Nevertheless, Piaw and Ting (2014:5120) and Schramm (2005) reduced this typology to two types of leadership based on the model of open and closed societies. Within this framework, open leadership refers to leaders who believe that employees will show initiative, engagement and independence, and power is shared equally between leader and employees, whereas closed leadership, with power located at the leadership, refers to an asymmetric sharing of power, where regulations are not created by conventions but by forces of circumstances.

Table 4.2 paints a picture of the divergent and convergent features of the six leadership styles within a typology selected by the researcher for the examination of the leadership profiles of school principals in Abu Dhabi. The discrepancies in the six styles depicted in section 4.6 are situated on the levels of the general focus, the specific traits and the distinctive approach.

Table 4 2 Educational Leadership Models' Foci, Traits and Approaches (by researcher)

MODEL	FOCUS	TRAITS	APPROACH
1 Managerial Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Functions of employees - Tasks of employees - Behaviours of employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureaucratic - Authoritarian 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rigid approach to management
2 Transformational Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Influencing school outcomes rather than directing them - Transferring the vision and values of the leader to all members of the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective change and reform in the education sector - Capacity to innovate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong shared vision - Empowering
3 Transactional Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exchanges between leaders and their followers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constructive - Active corrective - Passive corrective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positional authority to reward and promote - Realisation of the expected task outcomes
4 Participative Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restructuring the organisation - Conveying leadership roles to every member of the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitative more than directive - Charismatic - High interpersonal skills - Emotional intelligence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration - Interpersonal relationships
5 Moral Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dealing with ethical dilemmas - Promoting equity - Promoting cooperation - Promoting everybody's commitment to a shared school vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivated by leaders' values - Motivated by leaders' ethics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Morally committed - Empowering
6 Instructional Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purpose of education - Teaching (professional learning of teachers) - Learning (student growth+ high student outcomes) - Constructive feedback - Regular monitoring - Regular analysis of students' progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expert instructor - Excellent curricular knowledge - Excellent pedagogical knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most efficient for educational reform - Empowering (of teaching, learning, and academic outcomes)

4.8. Qualities Associated With Successful School Leadership

Leading a school is a complex task and a multilevel process exercise (Morrison, 2002; Pont, 2014). Hence, 'there is still too little evidence about what constitutes successful school leadership' (Bush, 2005:126). Rather, there is a suggestion that most principals act according to the school context and in response to the needs of staff and students in an effort to realign their core values with the prevailing change and innovation framework (Day, 2003).

Research shows that successful school leaders are driven by a personal value system and that they fully articulate this value system, thus creating a clear sense of institutional purpose and direction (Day et al., 2000; Campbell et al., 2003; Riley and Louis, 2013).

These studies demonstrate that values influence a school leader's perceptions of leadership, in terms of how they articulate their relationships with students and teachers as well as their expectations and aspirations for the school. This approach emphasises the moral nature of leadership. In a review of the literature on moral leadership, Jacobsen (2009:30) contends that moral leadership and ethical leadership can be used interchangeably because of 'their overlapping meanings involving judgments about human beliefs and behaviour in terms of good/bad and right/wrong'.

A study conducted by Campbell et al. (2003) found that moral leaders are able to promote equity and cooperation, and to win everybody's commitment towards a shared school vision. All told, a leader has to be morally committed to achieve the expected learning outcomes and to empower teachers to develop their leadership capabilities.

Through this, successful principals are able to communicate their vision to teachers, parents and students on a timely basis, a vision associated with the identification of the values that inform leadership on the significance of democracy, trust, equal opportunities, fairness, respect, love and equal service to all.

A host of research studies that have investigated the efficacy of leadership in schools have agreed that the success rate of a principal's leadership tenure is primarily based on the principal's ability to create an environment conducive to learning for teachers and students (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005; Marzano et al., 2005; Townsend and Bates, 2007). Indeed, a recent meta-analysis has demonstrated that instructional leadership has the greatest positive influence on student outcomes (Robinson et al., 2008, 2009) and classroom instruction. It encompasses the technical core of instruction, curriculum and assessment, providing direction and affecting the day-to-day activities of teachers and students in the school (Aziz and Baba, 2011). A principal with an instructional leadership style is supposed to be an expert instructor with excellent curricular and pedagogical knowledge (Bush, 2008).

Therefore, successful principals are those who can manage to create workplace conditions that offer learning opportunities and experiences that foster the professional development of their staff and further enhance the students' academic and social outcomes (Jacobson et al., 2007; Gurr et al., 2005; Moller et al., 2005; Townsend and Bates, 2007; Forde, 2011). Of course, this is not easy to achieve as it requires a significant amount of time and effort.

Furthermore, productive principals prioritise student learning and set clear goals with high expectations for students in tandem with the prevailing working context (Leithwood et al., 2006; Townsend and Bates, 2007; Forde, 2011). For example, a principal who is employed in a school with a myriad of challenges will set different goals and expectations from those of a principal working in a school located in a high socioeconomic status (SES) community. Indeed, successful principals take a personal interest in their students and are duty bound to support, encourage and celebrate their success. Overall, they create a learning culture in which everyone plays a significant role.

Central to the successful leadership discussion is the emergent relationships between leaders and students, teachers, staff and other stakeholders. Effective school leaders make heavy emotional investments in their relationships (Day and Gurr, 2014). In order to broaden these relationships, principals need to exhibit a real interest and compassion for the lives and achievements of their students, the wellbeing and professional development of teachers, and for the affairs of other stakeholders (Leithwood et al., 2006; Forde, 2011). It is also necessary for school administrators to emotionally understand and empathise with the people around them as this creates a safe, respectful and caring working environment.

Additionally, principals are supposed to create team harmony and group cohesion. Consequently, seeking the opinions of fellow teachers, students and parents enhances the mutual understanding of pertinent issues. Furthermore, they should support shared decision making by involving everyone in discussions on issues (e.g. values, beliefs, performance, etc.) affecting the school. In order to decentralise leadership and encourage participatory leadership, principals should possess democratic qualities such as being consensual, being good listeners and providing colleagues with time and space to contribute their opinions (Firestone and Riehl, 2005; Woods, 2005). By virtue of these qualities, leaders might establish trust and increase the teachers' and students' commitment to the accomplishment of the school goals and vision.

4.9. Leadership and Educational Change

Whilst educational change and educational reform could be said to be closely related, it is important to acknowledge that there are important distinctions between the two (Lumby, 1998). Rogers (2003) and Graetz et al. (2006) define change as a sequence of interrelated events implemented to progress towards an approach that will improve upon the quality of

certain practices. Hargreaves et al. (2005) contend that educational change is ubiquitous and that it figures large in Presidential and Prime Ministerial speeches. It is at or near the top of many national policy agendas. However, Hargreaves et al. concede that action to bring about educational change usually exceeds people's understanding of how to do so effectively.

As for reform, Angus (2004:2) points out that there are various 'jaundiced' views of the matter but in general it 'commonly implies change on a grand scale that occurs over months, perhaps years' and that 'school reform is a deliberate, planned intervention to improve some aspect of the operation of schools'. Angus (2004) clearly states that movements of reform within education are generally of a large scale, top-down variety as they are sparked and geared by governments rather than by individuals. For example, 'since the 1980s, reforms in the US addressed concerns about low scores on international tests, high dropout rates, and lower levels of achievement for students living in poverty', especially minorities' (Sherrow, 2011:33). This is due to the fact that government involvement in schools has greatly increased since the 1960s (McCluskey, & Edwards, 2009).

Earley and Weindling (2004:3) state that 'numerous research studies and reports from school inspectors and others claim that leadership, especially headship, is a crucial factor in SE and the key to organisational success and improvement'. According to Burke (2008), the leadership role is seen to be the key to the process of change being successful or disastrous. Useful change cannot be effective unless it is driven by high-quality leadership (Bush, 2003) and effective educational reform requires principals who are prepared to lead change (Bridges, 2003). It can therefore be clearly seen that the role of principals in educational change and reform is critical but it can only be successful if those principals have leadership building capabilities of the kind set out below.

4.10. Building Leadership-Capacity

The building of leadership-capacity could be said to be the improvement of the necessary conditions, know-how and competence to oversee and implement constructive change. Lambert (1998:12) goes along with this by defining the building of leadership-capacity as "broad-based, skilful participation in the work of leadership". In so doing, a process of discerning sustainable school improvement can be undertaken (Lambert, 2006:239). Barth

(2003:62) takes this a step further in stating that it “involves tapping into the reservoir of under-utilised talent within an organization”. In so doing, there exists the potential for many individuals to contribute to the collective expertise required in the school. It can be seen then that the building of leadership-capacity can lead directly to the leadership skills of others (Slater, 2008).

In addition to implementing continued improvements in schools, robust leadership must of course concern itself with providing a learning-focussed environment not just from the perspective of the school as a whole but from each individual. This thereby encompasses participation from everybody from parents to students and teachers to principals (Bush and Glover, 2012). According to Harris and Lambert (2003), this type of learning community is achievable via a distributed and shared leadership and Senge (1997:30) states that future school leadership will be the responsibility of diverse people and groups of people, all working together towards the good of the institution’s future. This works well in ensuring that required tasks are fairly distributed between individuals. The available literature (Harris, 2001; Stoll, 1999, 2009; Lambert, 2007) closely links capacity-building with school improvement.

There is strong consensus in the literature that collaborative working practices represent an important aspect of successful school improvement and, indeed, are linked to improved student outcomes. A healthy system of daily communication between its interested parties provides a strong indication of a healthy institution (Hargreaves, 1995). This healthy collaborative community would encompass individuals undertaking different tasks within the school and communicating in appropriate ways (i.e. asking questions, listening, providing feedback) depending on whether it is a group or individual conversation (Harris and Lambert, 2003).

This kind of collaboration can be seen in successful schools, where the inclusion of all parties is encouraged in terms of contribution, professional development, cooperative support systems and problem solving (Hopkins et al., 1996). By creating an environment in which school staff and students learn alongside each other, teachers themselves are in a position to use the personal processes of reflection and enquiry to further their own development (Harris, 2002a). In situating individuals directly within the development process, the capacity for school improvement has the benefit of, and is thereby further

enhanced by, the potential and commitment of each of those individuals towards their own professional development (Harris, 2002a).

It is important to note here, however, that the potential for continued school improvement, and therefore the potential for enhanced student outcomes, could be downgraded unless the focus is on building the capacity for school improvement. After all, schools ultimately exist for the benefit of students and the purpose of school improvement must be to “make a difference for students, more than adding value and ‘doing the right things’” (Stoll, 2009:115). Hopkins takes this further by viewing school improvement as “an approach to educational change that aims to enhance student learning outcomes and strengthen the school capacity for managing change” (2001:13), with a significant focus on the school processes that support this. It can be seen that this process actually represents a fundamental shift within school structures.

The path towards school improvement is usually target-based and has many nuances (Stoll, 2009) including team structure, the community of school staff members, parents and of course students, and the involvement of these aspects in activities that work to feed these various relationships. In a situation where all parties are working together as a group – be it a leadership, grade or research group – all individuals become involved in the work of student achievement and school practice. By active discussion, enquiry and dialogue, fresh ideas and ultimate actions can be opened up, thereby leading to a shared sense of responsibility towards dealing with the various issues of the school (Lambert, 2006). It has been demonstrated that the enhancement of student outcomes is well served within an environment of school improvement and in turn the capability of teaching staff to achieve this (Harris, 2002a ; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Stoll (2009:125) furthered this by expanding upon the idea of capacity to power whereby individuals become committed to engaging with, and upholding the education of, all learners within all spheres of the education system so as to facilitate an extensive reach of enhanced learning. The purpose of this is to offer everybody the possibility of habitual learning in their various environments and give them the skills to apply this learning to subsequent situations. Everybody would then have the capacity to work towards their own objectives regardless of changes occurring in their environment.

School improvement cannot be the responsibility of just the principal and, as such, leadership-plus (Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane, 2005) offers distributed leadership, whereby an extended group takes on ownership of leadership practices (Harris, 2008a). Capacity-building must maintain an emphasis on the kind of leadership that both enhances student learning and encourages the learning of other stakeholders in their efforts to improve student learning. This requires the identification of potential leadership qualities and the offer of various opportunities for individuals to enhance their own practice and dealings in the institution. This is essential if school improvements are not to falter; in other words, it is important that school leadership be disseminated throughout and entrenched within the culture of each school. Indispensable here is the development of student leaders, who can be the authors of their own education and provide feedback on their own school experiences (Stoll, 2009).

Although teacher leadership is central to the building of leadership capacity, the role of the principal remains the key position. Principals set in motion an environment which endows others with the necessary mind-set to induce improvement via change. Great leadership works through emotions. Therefore, mutually beneficial and trusting relationships can be engaged in by all (Goleman, 2002; Harris and Lambert, 2003; Williams, 2008). By introducing passion and flexibility into the school environment, an optimum climate is created within which school staff can innovate, cooperate and fully participate. Day et al. (2000) describe this style of principal as possessing “a clear moral purpose that earns trust among stakeholders”. Harris and Lambert (2003:38) add that all stakeholders have “the right, responsibility and capability to work as a leader”.

The development in teachers of such capacities as knowledge, responsibility and skills is a key element in the continuous enhancement of student achievement, as well as in the advancement of their careers, and brings to their roles the necessary commitment and effectiveness (Chapman et al., 2007; Penlington et al., 2008). There are three main areas at play here. The first involves enhancing the leadership-capacities of teaching staff, the second concerns the growth and continuation of teacher commitment and self-assurance, whilst the third relates to developing teaching capabilities in school staff.

There is no doubt that building staff capacities to learn, lead and teach to a high standard should be an essential element of school policy. Implementation of this type of professional staff development impacts positively upon student achievement as a result of

its direct application to teaching approaches (Leithwood et al., 2004). The implementation of skills and the knowledge enhancement of potential teacher-leaders enables the decision making processes of schools, in relation to the goals of the school, to be undertaken by an increased number of individuals and this can be seen in schools which achieve better student outcomes (Harris and Chapman, 2002; Moller et al., 2005). This is epitomised in Slater's (2008) assertion that school improvement is achieved and sustained more effectively when improvement is a shared responsibility amongst teachers, students and parents.

School culture is an important lens through which to view school development, since, in order for school improvement to take place, approaches, viewpoints and values held within the school need to be altered (Salfi, 2011). A culture that empowers and motivates school staff and students must be achieved. Trust and co-operative working are essential ingredients to instil within a school so as to achieve the required level of engagement by individuals with those effects of improvement; the emphasis remains firmly on teaching and learning here (Harris, 2002a; Harris and Lambert, 2003; Salfi, 2011). Schools whose expectations for their students and staff are high, whose stakeholders' values are consistent and who support teaching staff in taking on appropriate leadership roles are also those schools whose cultures are sympathetic to school improvement (Ainley et al., 2005:12).

In accordance with the above, the power and authority of the principal can be put to use in upholding dependent relationships between stakeholders and instituting systems to enhance the school's leadership capacity. Harris and Lambert (2003) describe how principals can use their power and authority to develop amongst teachers a uniform visualisation of a school which actively promotes learning dialogue, supports the school's values and works collaboratively with staff in its decision making processes.

4.11. UAE and the Need for Change and Educational Reform

We return now to a reflection of how the above impacts upon the UAE education system, where numerous efforts have been made towards raising standards, including the allocation of one quarter of its education budget to school improvement. According to ADEC (2012), educational reforms undertaken in recent years in the UAE aim to "prepare its citizens for life and work in a modern global economy". Indeed, some 25 per cent of the UAE education budget is spent on an extensive programme of major developments (UAE

Profile, 2007). Al-Ittihad newspaper (2005) reports that, prior to the implementation of this development programme, the country's education system was struggling with issues such as insufficient funding, outdated teaching methods, inadequate libraries, poor quality premises, inadequately trained staff (including principals) and little technology. Therefore, as stated by Cheng (1996), in order to attain the goal of improving education, change is vital. An interesting point arises here, however, since school principals are seen to be a major influence of the changes taking place and yet, as mentioned above, one of the areas requiring improvement is the training of school principals themselves (Nazzal, 2013).

The Emirati educational reform programme focused on attaining the following objectives: (1) developing an educational policy that first encourages active student participation in the learning process in a modern knowledge-based society and then mobilises social and political support for investment in education; (2) developing internationally benchmarked performance indicators at all levels of education and incorporating the UAE community's needs into the adopted global framework; and (3) developing a 10-Year National Plan aimed at improving education standards and raising the school infrastructure to international standards. Although the ADEC reform initiative was officially launched in 2006 under a Public - Private Partnership (PPP) project framework, it was not until June 2009 that ADEC decided to address the quality of school leadership by including new Professional Standards for Principals in its strategic plan for 2009-2018.

The role of school principals in the UAE's centralised education system has mainly centred around routine administrative tasks. In fact, Emirati principals are supposed to supervise deputy principals and heads of departments, and to delegate roles and responsibilities to them. Moreover, their other function is to supervise teaching staff and encourage them to pursue further professional development opportunities. They are also under an obligation to continuously consult the MOE and regional districts, work with the school parent and student committees, offer counselling and career guidance services, and collaborate with other welfare agencies within and outside the education industry.

According to international best practice benchmarks, an education system is judged successful based on, in the main, student attainment results. These standards were recently launched in the UAE but it is not clear whether these benchmarks have been implemented across the Emirati educational system. Additionally, inspection results provide feedback on the quality of teaching and learning. However, a lack of robust accountability systems has

rendered the process of measuring the quality of teaching and learning, and the documenting of students' progress, inefficient. Prior to the implementation of educational reforms in the UAE, school principal roles were eventually evaluated on the basis of incorrect metrics, whereby their performance was based on administrative skills regardless of school academic outcomes (Barber et al., 2007). However, current reforms prescribe that principals should be appraised on the basis of their ability to plan and lead the school community in a collaborative and participative manner, and to promote best teaching and learning practices (Macpherson et al., 2007).

In a recent study by Thorne (2011), it was reported that school principals in Abu Dhabi are faced with various cultural and political challenges, to the extent that they experience difficulty in coping with the demands of current leadership reforms. The Western approach that underpins the reforms under the PPP project has introduced a completely different understanding of educational leadership to that held by local principals. Of course, cultural differences have often resulted in mismatched expectations between members of the local school community and their counterparts from Western countries. School principals find themselves spending a considerable amount of time and effort trying to manage culture-based arguments over and above the burden of promoting a positive reform climate within the school community. Worse still, the fact that ADEC has not synchronised its training agenda with the partner companies has left school principals without clear directives. Finally, Thorne's study also recommends that ADEC has to implement programmes aimed at training and assisting school principals to develop their leadership skills. This study also advocates the establishment of a research unit within every school, charged with the duty of evaluating current practices and preparing the school strategic plan. This empowers the principal's role in the reform exercise and commits the principal to the outcome of the reform process.

Having appreciated the importance of effective school leadership, the body in charge of education reform in the Abu Dhabi government has recently developed Professional Standards for Principals in order to assist school leaders in the second phase of the reform project. The standards cover the following five basic facets of the role of the principal:

- Leading strategically
- Leading teaching and learning
- Leading the organisation

- Leading people
- Leading the community

Each of these standards consists of leadership competencies and indicators, with examples provided. Figure 4.1 provides a clearer overview of the Professional Standards for Principals set by ADEC.

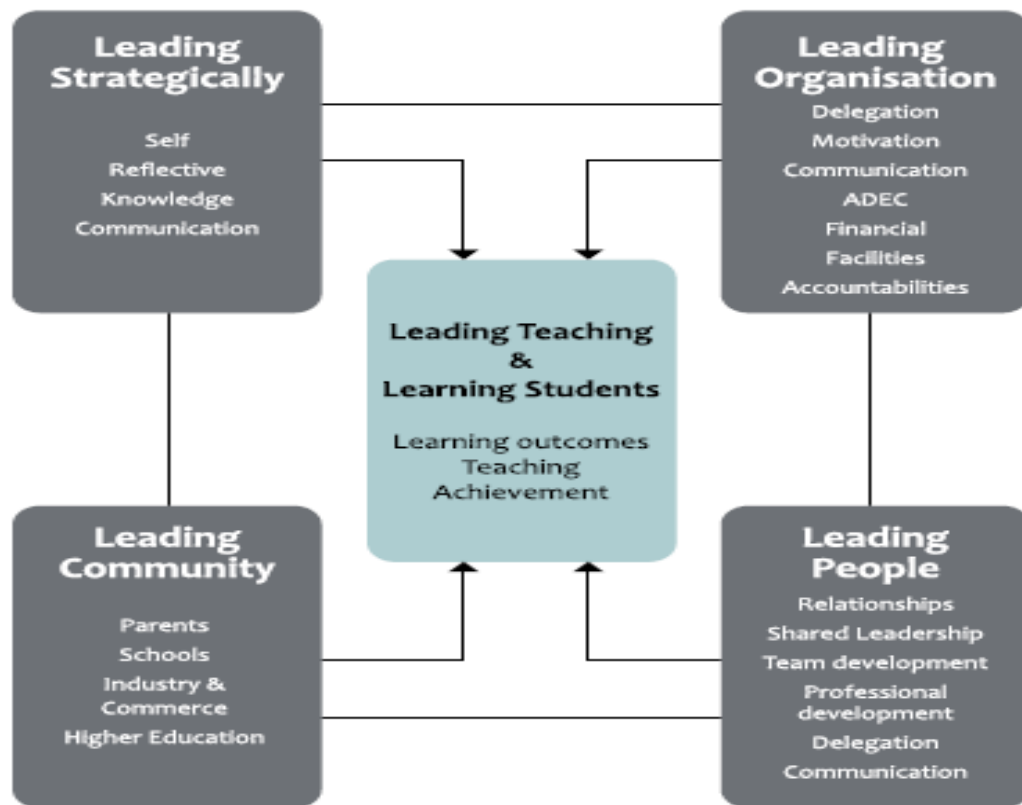


Figure 4 1 Professional Standards for Principals in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi: the Framework for leadership in Schools (ADEC, Website)

Although research on Abu Dhabi educational leadership is not extensive, findings of the few studies to date indicate that, due to ubiquitous reforms, the role of school principals is fast changing from working administrators to reform champions in the school community. Therefore, an effective school leadership framework should consider teachers, parents and students as indispensable stakeholders in the education system. This framework enables school leaders to seek an informed insight into every stakeholder's opinion, gauge the stakeholders' commitment to school welfare, and further provide the leaders with an opportunity to devise effective school leadership strategies.

The current study will add a new perspective to the existing literature on educational leadership. This is because, previously, the importance of teachers, students, policymakers and parents to effective school leadership has been neglected. Furthermore, few studies (if any) have tried to analyse this problem and to make a meaningful contribution to shared understandings of the role of education stakeholders in school leadership. Educational leadership is a highly contested subject in the Arab world (Yaseen, 2010). As a result, the importance of involving and consulting every stakeholder in the management of schools in Arab countries should be empirically researched in detail. This is particularly relevant to the UAE, where the education system is undergoing fundamental change, courtesy of the recent educational reform initiatives.

There is a belief that programmes or strategies that have proved successful in one country can simply be adapted and adopted in another (Razzaq and Forde, 2014). However, as a result of ignoring cultural, social and political differences between various countries, numerous well-intentioned and well resourced, but wholly inappropriate, borrowed interventions have failed. This is not to say that successful interventions cannot be utilised elsewhere, but rather that context is a very important factor which can ultimately determine whether an intervention will or will not be successful. This fits in well with Fullan's assumption that "success is about one-quarter having the right ideas and three-quarters establishing effective processes that sort out and develop the right solution suited to the context in question" (Fullan, 2007:104).

It is clear therefore that effective change requires careful consideration and planning (Honey, 1988); particularly in light of the fact that change is a fundamental element of development. The process necessitates much care and planning if a positive outcome is to be achieved.

4.12. Key Issues Associated with the Administration of Schools

This section focuses on major issues related to a school principal's work practices, namely the process of the selection of principals, principalship preparation programmes and the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of school leaders from an international perspective, while keeping an eye on the local context of the UAE and the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in particular.

4.12.1. Principalship and the Selection Process

The selection of candidates for the position of school principal should be based on appropriate criteria. As part of the reform agenda in the UAE, this ensures that only high calibre leaders are recruited into the education system. The selection process for school leaders varies across countries.

Kwan (2010) maintains that there are four criteria upon which to assess applicants for the position of principal of a secondary school by Hong Kong school supervisors: Generic Managerial Skills, Communication and Presentation Skills, Experience and Credence, and Religious Affiliation and External Connections. She remarks that, of these four criteria, only Experience and Credence is directly related to teaching and learning. She added that “the results reflect the proliferation of the roles of principals, from that of educational leaders to administrative managers” (2010:1859).

Pont et al. (2008) report that, in decentralised schooling systems (e.g. in the US, England and New Zealand), school principals are appointed by the district school governing bodies; meanwhile, in Austria, Korea and Spain, promotion to the position of principal is based upon a teacher’s seniority. In a recent development, South Korea is preparing a competency scale to ensure that appointed principals are indeed qualified for leadership. In Austria, Denmark and Ireland, candidates are now obliged to submit a proposal on school leadership.

In England, it is mandatory for principals to demonstrate their abilities through a set of field visits, interviews, presentations and assessments on specific skills. In some developed countries (e.g. Netherlands and Sweden), education departments are permitted to call for applications and then fill vacant school principal positions with applicants from non-teaching professions. For example, in the Netherlands, school principals are hired from the private sector and re-trained in management and leadership (Pont et al., 2008). It is important to note that these selection criteria are not without their critics. Doubts have been raised on the ability of a school principal without the requisite training in teaching and measured learning outcomes to successfully manage an educational institution. For this approach to be successful, any principal recruited from a non-teaching profession perhaps should be restricted to technical tasks, and ordinarily work as a co-principal with a knowledgeable and experienced colleague in the area of student learning.

In Australia, to qualify as a school principal, one must hold a postgraduate leadership certificate from a recognised organisation and be registered by a state as a teacher (McKenzie et al., 2007). Contrary to this, in France teachers elect their school principals. However, the Ministry of National Education has to appoint the elected principal on the condition that they have a minimum of three to five years' experience and have undertaken certain obligatory qualification courses including practical training in school administrative work (Derrington et al., 2005). For example, in most states in the US, principalship candidates are required to possess one to five years of teaching experience and demonstrate that they have previously undertaken administrative work in schools. Additionally, it is mandatory for all school principals to be certified as school leaders through specific preparation programmes. Most US states require school principals to renew their certification periodically in addition to taking a standardised assessment test (LeTendre and Roberts, 2005).

Making it mandatory for potential school principals to achieve practising licenses in addition to undertaking professional development courses in educational leadership ensures that the candidate is formally and continuously qualified for this position. Further, to ensure continuing evidence of outstanding performance and skills, the school principals' licenses should be renewable and salary schedules should reflect the licensee's level of competency (Mazzeo, 2003). Research on the UAE's education system and school leadership promotion modalities has established interesting findings. In the UAE, school principals are appointed by the Ministry of Education in consultation with every Emirate's educational council. In order to be considered for selection, candidates must be working as a vice-principal or subject supervisor in addition to possessing the following academic and vocational qualifications (Al-Taneiji, 2012):

- A Bachelor's degree
- Three years' experience of teaching in K-12 schools
- An 'Excellent' performance record in the last year and a 'very good' performance record in the previous two years
- An International Computer Driving License (ICDL)
- A minimum score of 500 in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or a score of 5 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

In addition to these requirements, candidates are required to achieve at least 75 points in an interview that tests their knowledge of educational principles and management skills. The

aim of the interview is to establish whether or not the candidate is competent in strategic planning, supervision, decision-making, time management and conducting meetings. The interview also seeks to assess the candidate's level of interpersonal skills – the ability to work with others and to consider diverse viewpoints. Upon fulfilling the interview requirements, the candidate is expected to attend training workshops on strategic planning, school supervision, school community management, social issues and student assessment. Finally, the candidate is evaluated after working as a principal for a probation period of one year in order to continue holding office (Ministry of Education, 2008). Nevertheless, it is uncertain whether these selection criteria will ensure that the appointees are the type of leaders with the credentials to transform UAE schools.

4.12.2. Principalship Preparation Programmes

Preparation programmes play an important role in preparing school principals to withstand the rigours of their duties and to face the challenges of the twenty-first century (Walker et al, 2013). It is recommended that professional development programmes for school principals should focus on instructional leadership (Blasé and Blasé, 1999; Fink and Resnick, 2001; Hale and Moorman, 2003). This strengthens teaching and learning, enhances professional development and propagates accountability. These programmes should also transform teachers into experts in community leadership with the ability to build partnerships between teachers and communities. As such, the principals must be able to demonstrate visionary leadership, motivate the school community and win the community's commitment in believing that students can perform better in their educational endeavours.

A number of qualitative and quantitative studies have examined the usefulness of preparation programmes for school principals. In a qualitative study by Reid (2008), a total of 12 primary school principals were interviewed. Six of these principals had a minimum of four years' experience, while the remainder were first time principals with just 18 months of work experience. The study explored the effect of coaching and leadership development on participants before they were appointed in their current roles. The results demonstrated that compulsory training, before and after appointment, refresh the principals' knowledge and skills, and increase their leadership confidence. A quantitative study by Fuller et al. (2011) analysed the state administrative databases at the Texas Education Agency (TEA). They found that principals who attended principal preparation

programmes within research and doctoral institutions were subsequently in a position to improve the competence and qualifications of the teachers they supervised.

In another investigation in the US by Orr and Orphanos (2011), a survey was carried out to compare 65 principals who had graduated from selected exemplary leadership preparation programmes to a national sample of 111 principals. The objective was to establish the influence of exemplary leadership preparation on the performance of school principals. The study established that there was a positive and distinct correlation between the participation of school principals in an exemplary leadership preparation programme and improved school performance (Orr and Orphanos, 2011). According to Weinstein et al. (2009), such preparatory leadership programmes should not be restricted to the period immediate prior to or after appointment as principal, but should also be scheduled during the transition phase. Teachers should be permitted to practice leadership roles prior to substantive appointment, for example through mentoring programmes and short-term shadowing of a substantive principal. It is advisable that, prior to working as a school principal, one should have worked as an assistant principal since this helps to increase school performance (Clark et al., 2009). In order to motivate new teachers to take up leadership responsibilities, vice principals need to be mentored, given incentives and provided with relevant professional development opportunities (Lee et al., 2009).

In the UAE, the MOE offers in-service training to school principals after they are promoted to leadership positions. The training programmes are centrally organised by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the respective Emirates' educational councils during school terms. The purpose of these programmes is to provide in-service training on school leadership, organisation and current affairs in the education industry to school principals (MOE, 2008). While working in a training and development centre in the Department of Education (and within ADEC specifically), the researcher was involved in training related to miscellaneous education staff. One of the main tasks of the Department of Education is to collect feedback from targeted trainees following completion of their training courses, to gain insight into their views on the viability and advantages of these training programmes to schools.

Respondents reported that the current training activities did not contribute significantly to their professional or personal development at the expected level and did not satisfy the overall needs of school leaders. These in-service programmes are not complemented by

local postgraduate degrees in educational administration, which might be seen as a further weakness.

4.12.3. School Leaders and Continuing Professional Development

In the past, training was narrowly viewed as short-term and limited to ‘one-off’ workshops and conferences where learners listened passively to ‘experts’. Now professional learning is regarded as a long-term investment conceptualised as a lifelong process that takes place in different forms at both individual and organisational levels (Donaldson, 2010). These forms include:

1. **Professional development** meant to increase an individual’s professional skills
2. **Staff development** used to develop staff in order to meet the needs of the organisation and
3. **Career development** meant to develop individuals so that they can progress in their careers within the organisation (Fidler, 1997).

Continuing professional development (CPD) refers to all these forms of learning. Other terms associated with CPD include in-service educational training (INSET), human resource development, continuing education and lifelong learning (Bolam and McMahon, 2004). Because of its association with such a variety of terms, it is difficult to precisely define CPD. Earley and Bubb (2004:3) defined CPD as “all formal and informal learning that enables individuals to improve their own practice”. They maintained that CPD serves two complementary purposes, occupational and personal development. However, Day (1999) describes CPD as an activity consisting of natural learning processes and consciously planned activities whose objective is to directly or indirectly accrue a benefit to the individual(s) or a school with the ultimate goal being to uplift delivery standards and the quality of education in the schools. From another perspective, CPD is described as any professional development activity that enhances the knowledge and skills of educators, the ultimate purpose being to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process (Bolam, 1993). Hence, schools should create learning opportunities for all its members (i.e. staff and students). Consequently, principals become head learners or learning champions.

The above definitions of CPD are underpinned by an emphasis on the requirement that any learning process should be cognisant of both the individual and organisational needs. This

implies that, prior to initiating any training and development programme, it is necessary to carry out both an individual and organisational training needs assessment (Hunzicker, 2011). Consequently, all CPD training and learning programmes should focus equally on individual, school and national priorities.

It is apparent that the role of CPD in improving teaching and learning is indisputable. However, questions on what forms of CPD programmes are likely to lead to higher education standards abound. Therefore, decisions on the appropriateness of the type of programme and the priority areas to be covered by such programmes are debatable (McMahon, 1999). CPD can be conceptualised as a continuum in which, at one end, the organisational system needs are more dominant while, at the other end, individual needs reign supreme. Dempster (2001) refers to these two ends of the continuum as people and system focussed CPD. Typically, there is a conflict of objectives between CPD programmes that are designed to serve mainly individual interests and those intended for organisational or national interests. Effective CPD programmes are those that strike a fine balance between the two extremes (Dempster, 2001). Similarly, Earley and Bubb (2004) stress that a good CPD programme should be able to simultaneously aid the realisation of sometimes contradictory or competing needs such as supporting school, local government and national development plans, as well as individual or interpersonal development plans.

4.13. Need for a UAE Definition of an Effective School and Effective School Leadership

There is a widely recognised close relationship between successful leadership and effective schools (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1996; National College for School Leadership, 2001; Bush, 2003; Botha, 2004). Despite international acknowledgement and recognition of the role played by effective school leadership in raising the standards of education, “a singular, overarching theory of leadership has proved to be elusive” (Harris and Day, 2003:89). As a result, it is not well known what forms of leadership development programmes lead to better school management and performance (Bush and Glover, 2004). Subsequently, there is also a lack of consensus on the nature of the most effective school leadership practice(s) and quality of professional leadership training and development programmes for school leaders.

Most of the existing research on effective school leadership is based on the experiences of industrialised countries. Therefore, the conceptual meanings, required competencies and skills, and choice of professional leadership training and development programmes designed to support effective school leadership are in every sense based on Western traditions and values. Although for a long time it has been presumed that Western based leadership theories, frameworks and practices are universal, their universal applicability has been questioned (Oplatka, 2004). Opponents and critics alike argue that ‘context matters’ and stress that the conceptualisation of leadership should be based on the contextual conditions (e.g. social, economic, cultural and political factors) of the country in which it is being implemented (Dimmock and Walker, 2005; Ylimaki and Jacobson, 2011). Depending on the prevailing conditions, the meaning of what constitutes effective school leadership varies across countries and this also applies to the roles to be played by school principals. Hence the qualities (e.g. knowledge, skills and values) required by principals to demonstrate effective school leadership are likely to differ across every country’s education system, and so too should the nature of leadership training and development programmes for school leaders.

In spite of these limitations, it can be argued that there is merit in the adoption by developing countries of Western-based theories and practices, as long as the local context is taken into consideration. Due to globalisation, it is not appropriate to deny that most reforms taking place in the industrialised world can be successfully implemented in developing countries also. Drawing on the results of an international study on school leadership development in 15 countries from Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and North America, it was concluded that, despite the apparent differences in cultural and institutional frameworks, common characteristics and trends exist throughout these countries (Huber, 2003). Leithwood et al. (2006) identified core leadership practices that are applicable in all contexts. Furthermore, Bush and Glover (2004) reported some convergence in the curriculum content of leadership training and development programmes across various countries in the world. Studies by Crossley et al. (2005), the Commonwealth Secretariat (1994), Macpherson et al. (2007), the New Media Foundation (Ed.) (2013), and in Africa and the Middle East, have clearly demonstrated that, if adapted to suit local conditions, some Western-based theories, concepts and practices can be successfully used to facilitate social and economic developments in developing countries.

Therefore, the need for contextualisation of what constitutes effective school leadership, and the development of localised school leadership training and development programmes, cannot be overemphasised. It is therefore necessary to study the effectiveness of school administration in developing countries to support the development of a contextual model – a model that takes into account the prevailing socio-economic, political and cultural conditions, as well as the different perspectives presented by stakeholder groups, on how to efficiently manage school affairs (Fertig, 2000). The importance of carrying out such a study in developing countries is anchored in the need for researchers to develop a flexible but paradigmatic approach to this problem. Strict adherence to a single paradigm may prevent them from capturing the real context conditions under which the education systems operate.

4.14 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a literature review on effective school leadership. It has addressed the two intertwined concepts of school leadership and school management, and has questioned whether they contribute to the crafting of effective school leadership. Additional issues discussed include the factors associated with leadership and management concepts – authority, power, responsibility and accountability – along with the typology of educational leadership models – managerial, transformational, transactional, participative, moral and instructional. This chapter also enumerates the qualities associated with successful school leadership and considers insights on school principalship. In relation to international perspectives of school leadership, the chapter has attempted to shed some light on the general features of educational leadership in the UAE, pointing to the dysfunctions within the educational system, the need for wide-reaching change and reform, and the hardships school leaders are facing in a centralised education system, an issue that will be investigated in depth in subsequent chapters. The next chapter will discuss the research methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

5.1. Introduction

Research design is defined as the plan or proposal to conduct research and involves the intersection of philosophy, strategies of inquiry and specific methods (Creswell, 2009). There are three critical factors within any research design that the researcher must clarify: (1) the philosophical (paradigmatic) position of the researcher, (2) the adoption of the methodology (strategy) and (3) the methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the framework set out in Figure 5.1 below is used to explain the interaction of these aforementioned three components.

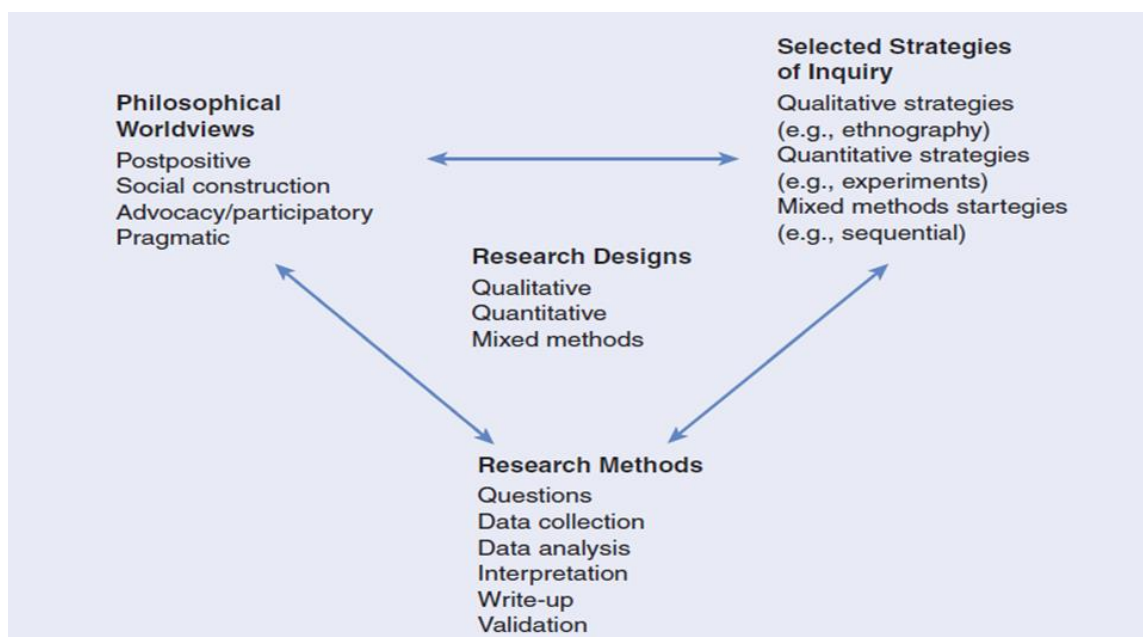


Figure 5.1 Selected Strategies Of Inquiry Adopted From Creswell (2009:5)

5.2 Philosophical Stance of the Researcher

In the words of Guba and Lincoln (1994:107-108), “A paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs or assumptions[...] It represents a worldview that defines for its holder the nature of the world, the individuals in it and the range of possible relationships to that world and its part”. In research, a researcher will use a philosophical stance (paradigmatic position) to propose a viewpoint about the nature of knowledge (ontology) in addition to the method used to know it (epistemology) (Creswell, 2009). Put more simply, ontology encompasses the perspective of the researcher in relation to the nature of social reality and how it is perceived, as opposed to epistemology which concerns the nature of knowledge itself and the ways in which it may be attained, with the behaviour of participants not being

influenced in any way (Ary et al., 2006; Creswell, 2009). A more detailed summary can be found in Table 5.1.

Table 5 1 Views of Knowledge/Paradigms (by the researcher)

Paradigm	Key features
1 Post-Positivism (Thinking after positivism)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on determinism – effects/outcomes are determined by cause. • Based on reductionism – significant issues are concentrated into a more manageable set of variables which may then be transformed into answerable research questions or testable hypotheses. • Based on objectivism – objective reality exists ‘out there’ and simply needs to be uncovered via empirical investigation using observations and measurements. • Based on the substantiation of theory – it is assumed that the world is ruled by theories and laws; such theories and laws have to be tested, substantiated and developed in order for enhanced understanding of the world to occur. • Based on the use of quantitative methodologies – experiments and surveys are implemented in the collection and analysing of data (Creswell, 2009).
2 Constructivism (Social constructivism)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is not possible for ‘truths’ about the social world to be ascertained (the social world is examined by the adoption of natural science methods; constructivism). • Reality is socially constructed and is viewed from the perspective of each individual. • There is no such thing as external reality (that which exists independently of the theoretical beliefs and concepts of individuals) (Robson, 2002). • A particular set of circumstances is open to numerous understandings (Cohen et al., 2007). • As individuals engage with, and interpret, the world, meanings are simultaneously constructed (Crotty, 1998). • Researchers must recognise the numerous possible social constructions of meaning and knowledge. • Theory generation is highlighted (Creswell, 2009). • Qualitative research methodologies including ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, case studies and narratives are emphasised. • Emphasises such qualitative research methods as interviews and observations (Robson, 2002).
3 Advocacy / Participatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither post-positivism nor constructivism sufficiently considers the interests of marginalised people or groups. • Highlights issues of legitimacy and equality within the context of repression, voice, ideology, power, participation, representation, inclusion and interests. • Envisages turning society and individuals towards social democracy. Investigates which interests are at work in particular situations and questions the extent of, and legitimacy of, those interests in terms of equality and democracy (Cohen et al., 2007). • Frees individuals from the restrictions upheld by unreasonable and unwarranted mechanisms that act to restrict self-development and self-determination. • Practical and collaborative. • A qualitative grounding (Creswell, 2009).
4 Pragmatism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncommitted to any one realm of philosophy and reality (Creswell, 2009). • The choice of methods, techniques and procedures of research are unrestricted and are chosen on the basis of which best meet particular needs and purposes (Creswell, 2009). • Truth is not based on a dualism between the mind and any reality

Paradigm	Key features
	<p>disconnected from the mind; rather, truth is whatever works at a particular time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers ‘what’ and ‘how’ to research, depending on the desired outcome (Creswell, 2009). • The most suitable research methodology must be chosen when addressing particular research questions. • The research methods used must offer a good fit with the research questions posed – this must be based on more than philosophical consistency of the epistemological positions, as is usually incorporated within the various research methods (Snape and Spenser, 2003). • A mixed methods approach in research is encouraged. • Researchers play a valuable role in the interpretation of results (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010).

An ongoing debate exists over the paradigm selection of researchers. The two dominant schools of thought evident in the literature are, firstly, the ‘incompatibility thesis’ (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010), whereby researchers should adhere to one paradigmatic stance. It is this single paradigmatic stance which prescribes research design, including the methodology, methods and instruments to be implemented (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:108). The incompatibility thesis, for example, directs researchers to observe either positivism/post-positivism or constructivism, with the implementation of quantitative or qualitative methodologies, respectively. Gage (1989) describes a ‘paradigm war’ whereby supporters of each method claim supremacy over the other.

The second school of thought is the ‘compatibility thesis’ (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010), whereby it is argued that the researcher’s paradigmatic position should be dictated by the nature of the research problem and questions, and should not be limited to a single paradigm. It is upon this rationale that the paradigm employed in this research, and pragmatism itself, is justified. Pragmatism encompasses a mixed methods approach and is known as the ‘third methodological movement’, after quantitative and qualitative methods (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010:5), the ‘third research paradigm’ (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15) and ‘a new star in the social science sky’ (Mayring, 2007:1). As discussed further below, methodological considerations arise in relation to ‘instrumentation and data collection’ (Cohen et al., 2007:5).

Whilst positivism, post-positivism and constructivism restrict the researcher to selecting the particular methods deemed appropriate within each paradigm, with pragmatism, researchers are free to implement methods from any paradigm, based only on which method is most appropriate to the research problem and the research questions. It is

entirely feasible for both quantitative and qualitative research methods to be incorporated within one study, dependent chiefly on the research problem itself.

The pragmatism approach has been employed in this study for the following reasons. Firstly, as the research aims to understand the meaning of an ‘effective school’ and ‘effective leadership’ from the perspective of stakeholders, and consequently identify areas for the professional development of secondary school principals, the potential exists for increased effectiveness, both within the schools and in the school leaders themselves. Secondly, this research is pluralistic as it embodies different perspectives of the various stakeholders, implements multiple research methods and draws its conclusions from both quantitative and qualitative data. The employment in this study of quantitative and qualitative approaches and methods is deemed essential since: (1) the issues being researched must be viewed from the perspective of various stakeholders, namely principals, teachers, students and parents; and (2) the results must be generalised within the context of strategies to be employed to improve SE by enhancing the quality of leadership of secondary school principals. Had the researcher been restricted to a single paradigmatic position, it would not have been possible for the objectives of this research to have been met. The decision to implement a mixed methods design in this study is therefore fully warranted and pragmatism offers the researcher the necessary framework for the study.

The third reason for applying a mixed methods approach in this research relates to the fact that its “popularity can be easily documented through journal articles, conference proceedings, books, and the formation of special interest groups” (Creswell and Clark, 2011). This approach offers several advantages in relation to the nature of the approach and its rationale. In this particular study, for example, the researcher is offered a method of collecting and analysing data, assimilating the findings and formulating interpretations using both qualitative and quantitative methods in a single study (Creswell, 2009:164). It was necessary for the researcher to work closely with the participants during the surveys and interviews; these surveys and interviews were conducted in natural settings and the participants were asked to construct insights into the effectiveness of their school and in relation to the leadership qualities and practices at their school, based upon their own experiences. Thus, the researcher was offered insights into how participants viewed these leadership practices and whether those practices contributed towards school effectiveness. As such, in this study, quantitative and qualitative research methods complemented one another in allowing enquiries to be undertaken of the participants, which in turn led to a

greater understanding of the situation than would have been possible with a simple exploration of the surface features of the phenomenon (Golafshani, 2003:597-607).

With qualitative and quantitative methods both having their strengths and weaknesses, the implementation of a mixed methods approach offers the advantage of compensating weaknesses and capitalising on strengths (Creswell and Clark, 2008; Punch, 2005:240). Triangulation, consisting of “many sources of evidence in order to determine the accuracy of information or phenomena” (Bush 2002:68), is a further advantage offered by the use of mixed methods (Punch, 2005).

Nevertheless, the application of a mixed methods approach does have its drawbacks, in particular in relation to “the need for extensive data collection, the time intensive nature of analysing both text and numeric data and the requirement for the researcher to be familiar with both quantitative and qualitative forms of research” (Creswell, 2009:205).

5.3 Research Design (Strategy)

Six strategies have been identified by Creswell (2009) within the mixed method approach: sequential explanatory strategy, sequential exploratory strategy, sequential transformative strategy, concurrent triangulation strategy, concurrent nested strategy and concurrent transformative strategy. Creswell (2009) also identifies four criteria upon which the selection of a particular strategy rests. The first criterion relates to how the strategy will be implemented (i.e. whether the data will be collected sequentially or concurrently), while the second relates to the question of implementation and which of the quantitative or qualitative approaches are given priority, or whether priority is equally distributed. The third criterion concerns the stage at which the data is integrated and questions whether the data should be integrated at the collection, analysis or interpretation stage. Finally, the theoretical criterion questions whether a particular theory directs the research. Taking all these factors proposed by Creswell (2009) into consideration, and for further clarification, the researcher attempts in Table 5.2 below to sum up and tabularise these mixed methods strategies and their key features.

Table 5 2 Mixed Methods Strategies and Their Key Features (Designed by the researcher adopted from Creswell, 2009:212-216)

Strategy	Implementation	Priority	Stage of Integration	Use of Theory
Sequential	Quantitative	Typically	Interpretation	May be present

Strategy	Implementation	Priority	Stage of Integration	Use of Theory
explanatory	followed by qualitative	quantitative, but can be qualitative or equal	phase	
Sequential exploratory	Qualitative followed by quantitative	Typically qualitative, but can be quantitative or equal	Interpretation phase	May be present
Sequential transformative	Either quantitative followed by qualitative, or qualitative followed by quantitative	Quantitative, qualitative or equal	Interpretation phase	Definitely present (i.e. conceptual framework, advocacy, empowerment)
Concurrent triangulation	Concurrent collection of quantitative or qualitative data	Preferably qualitative, but can be quantitative	Interpretation phase or analysis phase	May be present
Concurrent embedded	Concurrent collection of quantitative or qualitative data	Quantitative or qualitative	Analysis phase	May be present
Concurrent transformative	Concurrent collection of quantitative or qualitative data	Quantitative, qualitative or equal	Typically analysis phase, but can be during interpretation phase	Definitely present (i.e. conceptual framework, advocacy, empowerment)

The particular nature of the research questions in this study has necessitated the implementation of the sequential exploratory strategy. The first reason for this is that it was necessary for the research to be carried out in two stages. The objective of the first stage was to ascertain what key stakeholders took the concepts of an effective school and effective leadership to mean; as such, this stage was quantitative in nature. The quantitative data were then applied in the creation of an instrument to extend the research and corroborate the findings; as such, this stage was qualitative in nature. By applying qualitative data and analysis to further elaborate upon the quantitative results, both methods were reinforced (Creswell and Clark, 2008). The objective of the second stage was to analyse the collected qualitative and quantitative data separately before integrating them at the interpretation phase. It can be seen, therefore, that this research encompasses all the features required of a sequential exploratory mixed study strategy. Further details can be found in the sections that follow.

5.3.1 Importance of Literature Review

The first part of this study comprises a literature review which was carried out in order to scrutinise existing international literature on the subject of SE and school improvement.

The literature review was also used to help formulate the questionnaire and interviews and to aid the researcher in studying, analysing, discussing and supporting the findings of the study. The formulation originated from the author's substantial knowledge of the current state of schooling in the UAE and in Abu Dhabi, in particular. In the same vein, the questionnaire's statements stemmed from extensive discussions with the supervising team of the dissertation who helped immensely with the examination, selection, construction and scaling of the statements in the proposed order. The continued feedback from the supervisors made it possible to tailor the questionnaire statements and the content of the interviews to the nature of the respondents. The rationale behind this was to obtain specific information that was considered to be of prime importance for the teachers and principals, not for the parents and students and vice versa. Moreover, the extensive reading and review of international literature along with the supervisors' feedback made it possible to logically relate the aims of the overall research plan and objectives to the primary points of concern in the questionnaire and the interview.

In fact, Oppenheim (2001: 100) made it clear that '...many weeks of planning, reading, design and exploratory pilot work will be needed before any sort of specification for a questionnaire can be determined, for the specification must follow directly from the operational statement of the issues to be investigated and from the research design that has been adopted'.

Within this perspective, it was deemed essential to ascertain from the various stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and students) the factors they perceived as being prominent in terms of importance to the idea of an effective school. Other international studies have regarded the cooperation of these stakeholders important and have similarly collected viewpoints from teachers (Davies and Ellison, 1997; Townsend, 1997a; Kyriakides and Campbell, 2003; Ghani et al., 2011), pupils (Benjamin and Hollings, 1995; Karatzias et al., 2001) and pupils, parents and teachers (MacBeath et al., 1995; SOEID, 2010). It was her recognition of the necessity to obtain the opinions of these various stakeholders which led the researcher to formulating the statements used in the questionnaire and scheduled interviews.

It should be noted that the features identified in international research had a deep impact on the ongoing revamp of the UAE educational policies since 2005 and have been perceived as vital components of SE by educational policy makers in the UAE. Table 5.3 sets out the

groupings of the sample, the methods of data collection and the period during which the actions were undertaken.

Table 5 3 Overview of the Research Design

	Sample of the Research	Methods of Data Collection	Date
1	Teachers' sample	Questionnaire	Dec 2013-March 2014
2	Students' sample	Questionnaire	Dec 2013-March 2014
3	Parents' sample	Questionnaire	Dec 2013-March 2014
4	School principals and their deputies	Questionnaire Interview	Dec 2013-March 2014 June – mid-July 2014

5.3.2 Population and Sample of the Study

The quality of a piece of research stands or falls not only on the appropriateness of the methodology and instrumentation, but also on the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted (Cohen et al., 2007:100). 'Population' in a research study means a group of people. The population in this research were all secondary school stakeholders in UAE public schools. As it is hardly possible to study every member of a population, instead researchers usually study some members of the population to represent a sample or a subset of a population. A sample is a mini group of a large group called a population. Researchers then generalise their findings about the sample to the population (Cohen et al., 2007).

In this study, the sources of quantitative data were key stakeholders of UAE schools, namely secondary school principals and their deputies, teachers, students at grades 11 and 12, and parents.

The study involved 30 public secondary schools, representing 65 per cent of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi schools and 28 per cent of the 108 secondary schools in the UAE (see Chapter Two, Table 2.1). It should be noted that Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE, has the 'lion's share' of one third of the secondary schools in the UAE. Typical class sizes are 15-30 students. In each school in the UAE, there is a principal, two vice principals and an administrative staff consisting of a school secretary, social worker, technical support, laboratory technician, store keeper, librarian and school supervisor. The administrative staff supports the administration and teaching staff.

As the focus of this research is to identify the characteristics of SE in public secondary schools in Abu Dhabi from the perspectives of principals, students, parents and teachers, the following criteria were used in selecting the sample:

- The sample includes respondents from a variety of public secondary schools; boys' schools and girls' schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi consists of three regions: the Abu Dhabi Zone, the Al Ain Zone and the Western region Zone.
- The number of respondents is manageable, notwithstanding that the research is not funded and the researcher is handling the research single-handedly.
- Different numbers of schools were selected from each of the three zones, depending on the number of schools per zone (see Chapter Two, Table 2.1). From each school, six teachers and six students from grades 11 and 12 were randomly selected to participate. Thus, this sample comprised a total of 180 teachers and 180 students, representing the 30 schools. School administrators helped the researcher by involving six of the most cooperative parents (those ready to volunteer) per school to be part of the sample.
- The sample is representative of the public secondary schools in Abu Dhabi.
- Urban and rural representation: Schools from Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and the Western region were grouped into urban and rural schools. This step aimed to ensure representation of both urban and rural schools.
- Gender representation: Ten secondary schools with female principals were selected in the sample so as to ensure male and female representation.

The rationale behind these criteria was to obtain the views from respondents of all types of public secondary schools in Abu Dhabi. This will offer enrichment to the research, as the views will include a variety of types and locations of national secondary schools.

For the questionnaire, selection of the schools was carried out by stratified sampling. Stratified sampling involves distributing the population into homogenous groups, each group containing participants with similar characteristics (Cohen et al., 2007:111). The stratified sampling design here increases the precision of sample estimates (Smith and Glass, 1987:236). Hence, using stratified sampling for the survey instrument allowed an examination of how perceptions of the schools' stakeholders vary according to the characteristics of the effective schools.

Meanwhile, the secondary school principals formed the sources of qualitative data. The study involved ten public secondary schools, and six male and four female principals of schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in the UAE. They were selected because they had completed the section of the questionnaire that requested their agreement to participate in the second phase of the study, which aimed to examine the perceptions of these principals regarding the major components of this research: effective school definitions and factors influencing school improvement, effective leadership and change management within the UAE school system (see Chapter Seven).

Table 5.4 below displays basic professional profiles of the ten school principals who were interviewed and participated in the second phase of the present study. For ethical reasons, the individual respondents' anonymity has been preserved and their identities have been assigned descriptor alpha-numerical codes from P1 to P10, where P1 means interviewee Principal number 1. Table 5.4 also presents the participants' qualifications, years of teaching experience and years of leadership experience.

Table 5 4 Basic Professional Profiles of the Ten Interviewed Principals

No	Coded Name	Gender	Degree	Work Place	Years of Teaching Experience	Years of Leadership Experience
1.	P1	F	MBA Business	Al Ain	10	10
2.	P2	M	Bachelor Education	Abu Dhabi	7	18
3.	P3	M	Bachelor Education	AlGharbiya	8	18
4.	P4	M	Bachelor Education	Al Ain	6	22
5.	P5	F	Bachelor Education	AlGharbiya	9	11
6.	P6	F	Bachelor Science	Abu Dhabi	9	21
7.	P7	M	Bachelor Business	Abu Dhabi	8	14
8.	P8	F	MBA Business	Al Ain	10	12
9.	P9	M	Bachelor Education	Abu Dhabi	7	19

No	Coded Name	Gender	Degree	Work Place	Years of Teaching Experience	Years of Leadership Experience
10.	P10	M	Bachelor Education	Al Ain	7	20

5.4 Methods and Tools of Data Collection

The present study aims to investigate the perception of secondary school stakeholders regarding the proposed characteristics of ‘effective schools’ and ‘effective school leadership’, to identify the professional and educational needs of secondary school principals. The questionnaire is one of the tools used to achieve the aims of this study. Henerson et al. (1987:27-29) argue that the questionnaire is one of the most appropriate and useful data gathering instruments with which to survey attitudes. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in the second phase on a ‘critical case’ basis, i.e. with participants (school principals) in key positions who were ‘knowledgeable people’ about the activities and operations of the school.

5.4.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting information, providing structured and often numerical data. It can be administered without the presence of the researcher and is typically comparatively straightforward to analyse (Wilson and Mclean, 1994). For the present study, a questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers, principals, deputy principals, students and parents of the sampled secondary schools (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire was designed to gain the respondents’ views of their school for two reasons: to determine and understand the perceptions held about ‘effective schools’ and ‘effective leadership’, and to identify the professional and educational needs of secondary school principals.

5.4.1.1 Questionnaire Method and Procedures

In order to explore the perceptions of the school stakeholders, a questionnaire with four versions (being specific to the participant’s categories) was designed (see section 5.6.1.3): one for school principals and their deputies, one for teachers and one for each of the students and their parents. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit respondents’ views on the effective school, in terms of the qualities of effective school leaders, the

importance of these factors and whether or not these factors were perceived to be in existence in UAE schools.

5.4.1.2 Using and Constructing the Questionnaire Instrument

A questionnaire was used to gather data from the sample during the first stage of the research for the following reasons:

1. A quantitative method would allow the researcher to use a large sample and thus provide the opportunity to generalise the results of the survey. This would not be possible with a qualitative method such as the use of interviews (Cohen et al., 2007:320). Babbie (1990) asserted that the most appropriate strategy if one wants to generalise from a sample to a population is survey research, in which inferences can be made about the characteristics, attitude, or behaviour of this population. Therefore, the sample consists of six teachers, six students, six parents and two school principals/deputies from each school. So, from each school there were a total of 20 participants, providing a total of 600 participants for the study sample. The age of the students ranged from 16 to 18.
2. The limited time needed for administering and analysing the questionnaires in a large sample such as that used was also an advantage. The time required to collect the data is typically less for a questionnaire than any other method (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993). A questionnaire also provides the chance to use standardised measures that fit various opinions and experiences into pre-determined response categories.
3. By using a questionnaire, each respondent received the same set of questions phrased in exactly the same way (Cohen et al., 2007:320). In addition, questionnaires are believed to yield more comparable data than interviews (Sax, 1979).
4. By using a questionnaire, it was guaranteed that the respondents within the various regions could represent a wide geographic area.
5. The data collected through the questionnaire was used in the second part of the study (Chapters Seven and Eight), enabling the researcher to investigate in depth the opinions of school leaders related to factors that contribute to effective schools.

On the other hand, the use of questionnaires has some disadvantages:

1. The use of a survey limits the ability to investigate the sample's answers in depth. The quantitative element of the study, namely the questionnaire, was not designed to probe deeply into respondents' opinions about the factors of effective schools in UAE secondary education but just to record and analyse them, acknowledging the limitations of such a method.

2. When designing a questionnaire, Robson (2002:241) advises that "the survey questions ...are designed to help achieve the goals of the research and in particular, to answer the research questions". The following table clarifies the linkage between the research questions and the questionnaire content.

Table 5 5 Linkage between Research Questions and the Questionnaire Content

No	Research Questions	The Relevant Questionnaire Item
1.	What is the meaning of SE and what is an effective school according to the opinions of each stakeholder (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?	Part B (1): Definitions of school effectiveness. There is one section which consists of four possible definitions of school effectiveness. Respondents are asked to choose the level of importance they agree with.
2.	What are the characteristics that contribute to effective schools as perceived by stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?	Part B (2): Opinion with regard to what makes an effective school. Five main factors were identified as contributing to SE and each factor included between six and 17 sub-factors. Respondents are asked to choose the level of importance they agree with.
3.	Are there any characteristics of effective schools that are more important for SE than others according to the opinions of each stakeholder and, if so, why?	
4.	What are the characteristics of secondary school leadership that can be associated with effective schools as perceived by stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?	Part C: Opinion of effective school leadership. 17 sub-factors are identified. Respondents are asked to choose the level of importance they agree with.
5.	Are there any characteristics of effective leadership that are more important for SE than others according to the opinions of each stakeholder and, if so, why?	
6.	What are the required strategies and developments for secondary school and school leadership to become more effective in the UAE?	Part D: Issues associated with school improvement. 18 sub-factors are identified. Respondents are asked to choose the level of importance they agree with. Part F: Strategies for improving school leadership. Fourteen sub-factors are identified. Respondents are asked to choose the level of importance they agree with.

5.4.1.3 Piloting the questionnaire

The importance of piloting the questionnaire cannot be ignored. Piloting the questionnaire has several benefits such as allowing the researcher to test the validity of the questions and whether it will bring forth responses that achieve the research objectives (Saunders et al, 2009). It also helps to develop appropriate procedures for administering the survey with

reference to field conditions. Bell (2005) outlines that the following should be looked into when pre-testing an instrument of data collection:

- How long the questionnaire took to complete?
- How clear the instructions were?
- Which questions were unclear or ambiguous?
- Which questions may have made respondents uneasy?
- Any major topic omissions?
- Unclear or unattractive layout (Bell, 2005)

In this study, piloting the questionnaire was done in several ways. First, two colleagues were informally asked to read through the questionnaire and provide their comments, particularly with respect to wording, in order to check if the questions were clear, simple and unambiguous (Robson 2002). Also, the head of research in the Abu Dhabi Education Council, gave a helping hand by clarifying some of the questions and restructuring the questionnaire to mirror the Likert scale in order to get more reliable results. Then the questionnaire was then forwarded to the researcher's supervisor who commented on the number of sub-items within the main questions. He advised the researcher to reduce the number of some of the items and also recommended that some be made clearer. Then, following his suggestions, two prospective respondents from each group of stakeholders were asked to complete the questionnaire and to give any comments regarding any issues they might have. Some reported that they had some difficulty in understanding some of the terms.

The researcher realised that it was advantageous and possible to use both rating systems but there was a need to sensitise the respondents so that they became well acquainted with the two systems. The sensitisation was done when the researcher had the opportunity to meet the principals and senior officials in one of their meetings, as discussed in the relevant section below. The final version of the questionnaire is shown in Appendix (1).

5.4.1.4 Questionnaire Sections

The researcher opted for closed questions instead of open-ended questions related to the characteristics of effective schools. The closed questions, such as multiple-choice questions (see the first part of the questionnaire) or marking on a specific scale, permitted

only specific and selected responses (see the remaining part of the questionnaire). In addition, “closed questions are easier and quicker to answer; they require no writing; and quantification is straightforward” (Oppenheim, 1992:43).

There were three versions of the questionnaire, each version being specific to the participants’ categories, as follows:

- The questionnaire for the school principal contained five parts.
- The questionnaire for teachers also had five parts.
- The questionnaire for students and parents had four parts (students and parents were exempt from the fifth part of the questionnaire as they are not familiar with the kind of development that a school principal should perceive).

The first section of the questionnaire collects demographic information regarding the profile of each respondent including age, sex, educational and professional qualifications, and work experience.

The second section attends to the characteristics of effective schools collected together within the following five major factors associated with effective schools, as tracked in the literature:

1. Definitions of an effective school (four statements)
2. School factors (16 statements)
3. Teaching and learning factors (12 statements)
4. Students factors (seven statements)
5. School - home relationship (seven statements)
6. Local community factors (six statements)

Each of these five main factors has sub-factors. For example, the teaching and learning section identifies 12 sub-factors that can be associated with effective schools. The details are discussed in Chapter Three. These factors were arranged to reflect the research questions and comprised a list of phrases/statements that respondents were asked to rate in line with their views concerning their level of importance in terms of improving school effectiveness.

The third section covered the qualities of effective leadership, consisting of 17 statements, where a similar process was used to identify the level of importance that respondents felt each factor held.

The fourth section covers issues associated with school improvement such as school principal preparation programmes, ambitious visions established by the leader and staff, the integration of Islamic and local cultural values aligned with modern educational methods, strategies of change management, etc. The proposed 18 statements were arranged first to reflect the research questions and then to allow the respondents to express their perceptions and the extent to which they agreed with each statement.

Lastly, using a 14-statement dataset, the final section focuses on collecting the views of school principals regarding ways in which school leadership can be developed and continuing professional development programmes that might encompass undertaking an MBA or PhD degree in educational leadership, attending training courses, being coached by an experienced principal, etc.

By covering these factors of schooling, the questionnaire administered to four different categories of school stakeholders hoped to mirror different levels of reflections by different kinds of targeted participants.

It is noteworthy that there were four main types of question used in the questionnaires:

1. Demographic factual questions using a multiple choice format.
2. Opinion and attitudinal questions, whereby the participants' opinions of the importance of specific factors are indicated with a five-point Likert Scale, which is a psychometric scale commonly used to scale responses in survey research, such that the term is often used interchangeably with rating scale (Wuensch, 2005). The Likert Scale was used to mark the questionnaires' statements by adapting different formats such as:
 - Level of agreement where, for example, 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = strongly agree.

- Level of importance where 1 = not important, 2 = of little importance, 3 = moderately important, 4 = very important, and 5 = extremely important.

In the present study questionnaire, parts B to E were tabularised in such a way that the statements to be rated by the stakeholders were placed to the left of a five-point scale reflecting the level of agreement with these statements; this made it simple for the stakeholders to tick the appropriate boxes reflecting their perceptions. The Likert Scale used in this study has been undertaken by developing a spectrum of items that are statistically tested to identify the degree to which they measure the same things (Aiken, 1996).

In this study, translating the questionnaire from English to Arabic was a particularly problematic process with respect to the required academic wording, which needed to remain the same. The Arabic version was trialled using another Arabic teacher at UAE University to ensure the sense of the items had not been lost in translation (see Appendix 2). The questionnaire, the plain language statement and the consent form were translated into Arabic. The translations and the three documents were given to the head of research at the Abu Dhabi Education Council and colleagues in ADEC for feedback, and some minor adjustments were made. Some discrepancies were identified in the process, which were removed. The final version of the questionnaire is shown in Appendix 1.

5.4.1.5 Distributing and Collecting the Questionnaires

Before distributing the questionnaires to schools, a letter was sent with ADEC approval to the principal of each school that was chosen to take part in the research (see Appendix 4). The letter asked for their permission to participate in the questionnaires and to be part of the sample groups. Once permissions were granted, the questionnaires were distributed to each of the selected schools along with a consent form for each participant, at the beginning of January 2014. The participants were given a period of approximately one month to complete the questionnaires, which were collected in mid-March 2014.

The process of distributing the questionnaires was carried out in a systematic manner. The researcher hand delivered the plain language statement along with the consent form and the questionnaire in Arabic language to each school principal. The school principal appointed a moderator to administer the questionnaire process. The plain language statement explained the research (see Appendix 7), the purpose of including the participants, the right

of the participants to decline or withdraw their consent to participate at any point and the strict protocol of anonymity and confidentiality to be followed for the data. Robson (2002) and Denscombe (2003) both underlined the importance of the anonymity of respondents in stating that, not only is this a matter of professional ethics, it is also important in terms of obtaining valid responses. The consent form included the statement on the voluntary nature of the participation. The student questionnaire was distributed by assigned moderators as it needed to be explained to the students in order to ensure their understanding.

The participants were given a free reign to contact the researcher for further clarifications, as set out in the plain language statement. A date was mutually agreed for the collection of the completed questionnaires and a plain envelope was provided to every school principal, in which they were to seal their questionnaires before handing it over to the administration office to be collected by the researcher.

5.4.2 Study Sample

The sample of the study consisted of four groups of sample types (teachers, principals and their deputies, students and parents) who were stakeholders of public secondary schools in the UAE. Six hundred questionnaire copies were sent to the samples of the study: 60 copies for principals, 180 copies for teachers, 180 copies for students and 180 copies for parents.

The number of completed copies of the questionnaire received back from respondents was 462 (77%), which was positive and encouraging rate. Table 5.6 shows the number of questionnaire copies distributed to each sample type and the number of received completed questionnaire copies, along with the response rate of the completed copies.

Table 5 6 Sample Response Rate of the Questionnaire

Stakeholder Group	Number of Distributed Questionnaire Copies	Number of Completed Questionnaire Copies	Percentage of Completed Copies
Principals	60	46	76.7%
Teachers	180	136	75.6%
Students	180	142	78.9%
Parents	180	138	76.7%
Total	600	462	77 %

The study sample consisted of both genders for each sample type. Respondents who completed the principal survey consisted of 19 female principals (representing 41% of the total number of principals) and 27 male principals (representing 59% of this sample type). Respondents from the teacher sample type consisted of 50 female teachers (representing 37% of teachers) and 86 male teachers (representing 63% of this sample type). Sixty five female students responded to the survey (representing 46% of students) while 77 male students completed the survey (representing 54% of this sample type). The number of fathers who completed the questionnaire was 93 (representing 67% of the parents' sample type) and 45 mothers responded to the survey (representing 33% of the parents). In general, it is noticeable that there was a low response rate from females. Table 5.7 shows the number of respondents according to gender.

Table 5 7 Sample response rate by gender

Stakeholder Group	Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Principals	Male	27	59%
	Female	19	41%
	Total	46	100%
Teachers	Male	86	63%
	Female	50	37%
	Total	136	100%
Students	Male	77	54%
	Female	65	46%
	Total	142	100%
Parents	Male	93	67%
	Female	45	33%
	Total	138	100%
Total		462	

5.6.2.1 Demographic Data of the Study Sample

The dataset extracted from the questionnaires administered to the stakeholders – the subject of the current study – reveals that:

1. The schools are state schools; 20% of the targeted schools are located in rural areas.
2. Forty six principals (27 male and 19 female) of various (UAE/Arab/non-Arab) nationalities took part in the questionnaire. Seventy four per cent of the principals are aged less than fifty. Fifty nine per cent of the principals have previous experience of no less than five years as a principal. Forty six per cent of the

principals have more than ten years' teaching experience. Thirty per cent have a higher diploma and only 10% have an MBA.

3. As for the teachers, 83% are more than 30 years old. Some 86.5% have teaching experience exceeding five years.
4. A total of 138 students' parents took part in the questionnaire (61 male and 77 female), of UAE and Arab nationalities (73 and 27, respectively). The students are grade 11 and grade 12 children, with the majority (47%) being in grade 12.

5.4.3 The Interviews

The interview is a distinctive research technique used as a principal means of gathering information having a direct bearing on the research objectives. As Cohen et al. (2007:351) explain:

'By providing access to what is 'inside a person's head', it makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (value and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitude and beliefs)'. The order of the interview may be controlled while still allowing room for spontaneity and the interviewer can press not only for complete answers, but also for responses to complex and deep issues' (Cohen, et al., 2007:349).

The purpose of the interview in this research was to obtain first-hand, in-depth information with which to confirm and generalise the results from a sample of secondary school principals, so as to clarify issues surrounding SE and professional school leader development. The potential for trust and cooperation between the interviewer and the respondents is higher with face-to-face interviews than with anonymous surveys (Cohen et al., 2007:219-221). The results from phase one (questionnaire) of this study were used to build up the interview questions and collect qualitative data. The interviews were used in the second stage to gather the necessary data from the sample, for the following reasons:

First, a qualitative method allows an in-depth investigation of the questionnaire results, which is something that would not be possible using a quantitative method. Building on the

results derived from the questionnaires, the interviewee and the interviewer would not start from scratch but rather from a clear dataset package.

Second, using the data from the questionnaires as a basis for discussion, the interviews were used to triangulate the results of the questionnaires. This triangulation strategy is known as “between-method triangulation” which means collecting data on an issue using more than one method.

At the same time, interviews do have disadvantages. For instance:

1. The process of undertaking interviews is time-consuming and costly. The researcher overcame this by following a schedule of pre-prepared questions, although deviations from these questions were undertaken where necessary in order to maximise the information obtained. Also, a small sample (ten school principals) was used to minimise the disadvantage. This was important as the research is not funded and is being conducted singlehandedly by the researcher.
2. This study involved a sample of ten school principals; the researcher was looking for the common themes in analysing the qualitative data, to gain in-depth information and investigate the different issues across the research groups.
3. In order to minimise any potential difficulties in analysing responses, it was important that key issues were identified before the interview. A useful aid is to have a list of issues and to tick them off if the interviewee mentions them along the way. So, if any key points need to be discussed, these should flow from the discussion rather than being forced on the interviewee. It is also useful to link issues already being discussed to new issues on the list, so that the conversation feels natural and unforced.
4. While conducting a series of interviews, the interactional structure of the interviews might be altered from one setting to another. For instance, the respondents might be answering questions that are not necessarily phrased in the same way and order, making it more difficult to yield comparable data. Using an interview schedule with specific questions (although the interviewees in some cases were asked to answer other questions that arose during the interview) minimised this disadvantage.

5. The use of interviews could not guarantee that the respondents covered a wide geographic area, due to the time limit factor.

Hence, the interview exercise was conducted using a semi-structured format. Drever (1995:1) points out that, in the semi-structured interview, the interviewer sets up a general structure by deciding what ground is to be covered and what main questions are to be asked. This was most convenient for the present study, as a balance between ensuring that all the information needed is collected and that still there is a chance to probe deeper into respondents' answers and seek clarification or justification.

The questions were relatively open-ended, covering particular topics, and were guided by some general questions (see appendix 3a for the English version and appendix 3b for the Arabic version). The intention of the interview was to investigate in greater depth the factors identified in the questionnaires as contributing to school effectiveness. The data from the survey was then triangulated with the data collected in the interviews. The questionnaire results allowed the researcher to construct the interview questions where specific issues were discussed. Questionnaires provided the chance to use standardised measures to fit diverse opinions and experiences into predetermined response categories.

In designing a semi-structured interview, care must be taken to phrase questions so as to ensure that the respondents can say what they want, rather than using leading questions (Stringer, 2004:66). Five main questions were carefully structured to achieve the interview aims.

A total of ten school principals were interviewed. All the interviews were audiotaped for the purposes of transcription, with the exception of three principals who did not accept the audiotaping protocol; in these cases, the researcher resorted to note-taking. The principals were interviewed at an agreed appointment time for a period of at least 45 minutes.

The directions for the interviews were established by the researcher by asking the respondents a set of specific questions, although interviewees also answered other questions that arose during the interview. This enabled the interviewer to probe ideas expressed earlier or to introduce new topics (Cohen, et al., 2007:362-363). The topics of the interview were based on the questionnaire results and the interview schedule was divided into five parts, covering specific issues related to: (1) Definitions of School

Effectiveness; (2) School Effectiveness Characteristics; (3) Effective School Leadership Qualities; (4) Strategies for Improving SE; and (5) Leadership Development.

Briefly, the stakeholders were asked to:

1. Define the term 'school effectiveness' and/or 'effective school' according to their understanding;
2. Discuss the order of importance of the characteristics of effective schools and effective leadership, as identified by the various stakeholders in the questionnaire;
3. Discuss why these characteristics might be considered as most important by the various stakeholders in the questionnaire;
4. Discuss the ways of developing school effectiveness, as identified by the various stakeholders in the questionnaire;
5. Express their opinions about leadership development and whether current in-service programmes actually helped school principals to improve their leadership, in addition to whether they assisted them in developing their schools.

All the interviews were recorded using a SONY Handy Recorder, except for three interviews which were recorded through written notes; these three interviewees stated that it would be more comfortable for them to talk openly if they were not audiotaped. The atmosphere in the interviews was fairly relaxed and comfortable with minimal distractions from phone calls and interruptions. Building up a sense of trust and rapport between the interviewer/researcher and the participant is a necessary part of the interview process. The consent form (Appendix 6) and the plain statement (Appendix 8) were given to each interviewee at the beginning of the interview meeting. In addition, the issues of confidentiality and anonymity were orally explained to gain the interviewees' trust and make them more comfortable. Through good eye contact, nods of assent and murmurs of agreement, the researcher encouraged the respondents to express themselves freely. Moreover, the participants were invited to ask question where any misunderstanding might arise. In the meantime, the researcher ensured that the agenda was covered, with no duplication or omission of main elements. The researcher had to maintain an element of timekeeping and to move naturally from one question to the next, listening carefully to the answers and seeking explanation or clarification when necessary.

The interviewees were cooperative with the researcher, and shared her concern in relation to the purpose and findings of the current study. They felt that their contribution in terms of elaborating upon the current study findings would help educational policy decision makers in the UAE introduce the necessary changes and improve the current state of schools and the educational system in general. Most of the people who were contacted agreed to participate in the study and gave freely of their time. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. Five to ten minutes were spent in outlining the background of the study and discussing how the data would be used. As the interviewer is herself an internal stakeholder, she shares some interests with some of the participants. However, the researcher behaved as fairly as possible and used her experience only in the planning for the data collection. The interviews were then transcribed. Participants had an opportunity to view the final transcript to check the accuracy but no changes were required.

5.4.4 Validity and Reliability Issues

A crucial aspect of any research design is its validity and reliability. Validity is a requirement for both quantitative and qualitative research (Cohen et al., 2007) and takes different forms. For qualitative data, validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the objectivity of the researcher (Cohen et al., 2007). On the other hand, for quantitative data, validity might be improved through careful sampling, appropriate instrumentation and appropriate statistical treatment of the data (Cohen et al., 2007:133). With this in mind, and in accordance with Carmines and Zeller (1979), the researcher has taken care in this study to align theoretical concepts with the various measuring procedures that were undertaken. Thus, it is anticipated that the validity of the study has been upheld.

Where it is demonstrated that questionnaires and interviews are measuring what they are supposed to measure, this is known as face validity. This means that the instruments are judged by those interested in the subject as being valid. In the current study, the comments of these judges were used to improve upon the research instruments. To ensure construct validity, the following points were observed:

- Prior to the establishment of any research instruments, clear research aims and questions were formulated.

- Existing research in the area was scrutinised in order to identify commonly applied approaches.
- The research supervisor and other relevant colleagues were asked for advice in relation to research design.

We now turn from validity to the question of reliability. According to Carmines and Zeller (1979) and Denscombe (2003), reliability as a concept is used to test and/or evaluate research, although it is most commonly associated with quantitative research; it evaluates whether there is neutrality in the effects of the research instruments and whether comparable results would ensue, if repeated with the same ‘objects’.

The reliability of the study was achieved through using various methods in data collection. First, the study used two main tools – the questionnaire and the interview – to ensure valid answers. Second, data from four different groups (school principals, teachers, students and parents) were included in the study, which served to vary the perspectives and diversify the views of the subjects with regard to the issues at stake. Moreover, to ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire used in this study, Cronbach’s Alpha was employed to measure its internal consistency reliability. Being a measure of internal consistency, Cronbach’s Alpha measures how closely related a set of items are as a group. Knowing that a reliability coefficient of .700 or higher is considered ‘acceptable’ in most social science research situations, the Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient for the present study is .900, a score that presents a high reliability coefficient, whereby the study can be considered internally consistent.

5.4.5 Data Triangulation

As data triangulation is “comparing many sources of evidence in order to determine the accuracy of information or phenomena” (Bush, 2002:68), triangulation is used in this study to clarify the research process. As Neuman (2006) argues, studying a phenomenon from different angles provides a clearer understanding and perspective.

In applying triangulation to the particular study in question, the chief goal is to collect the opinions of a significant number of stakeholders from each school (e.g. school leaders, teachers, parents and students); inevitably meaning that many different perspectives will arise.

When considering research that has been undertaken with the use of multiple research methods, it is important to consider whether the conclusions reached and the theories formulated would still stand if the research were to be repeated or if another researcher were to embark upon the same research. In order to ensure this, there must be complete clarity in the research in relation to its aims and premises, how the research was conducted and the rationale behind the decisions made (Denscombe, 2003).

5.4.6 Ethical Issues Associated With Data Collection

When undertaking research in connection with human beings, it is essential that the proposed research first be passed through the appropriate Ethics Committee of the University of Glasgow for review.

The research was conducted within public secondary schools in Abu Dhabi and, as such, and in compliance with the above requirement, all appropriate paperwork was completed and submitted to the Social Science Ethics Committee. An Ethics Approval was passed on 10 December 2013. An Educational Pass was granted by the Director General of ADEC one month later.

In accordance with Cohen et al. (2007:69), subsequent to the granting of the Educational Pass, the aims, purpose and importance of the research were communicated in writing to the principals (as overall authorities) of the various participant schools. Included were copies of the Educational Pass. The reason for this communication was twofold: (1) to elicit the cooperation and goodwill of the principals; and (2) to highlight to the principals the dependability of the researcher in conducting the research. Many of the participant schools were also contacted by telephone by the researcher, to further promote the study.

Various regulations were thereafter applied to the research procedure, as set out below:

- It was necessary for the informed consent of every participant of the study to be obtained prior to its commencement, in order to demonstrate their ***voluntary participation***. Subsequent to an explanation by the researcher (delivered both orally and by a Plain Language Statement) concerning the research aims and what it was hoped would ultimately be achieved by the research, this informed consent was provided by the participants by way of the questionnaire. Informed consent confirms that participants have not been manipulated, forced or intimidated into

their involvement and that they are taking part by voluntary consent and in the knowledge that they may withdraw at any time if conditions justify this.

- Participants were assured of *confidentiality and anonymity*. They could trust that their participation in the research would remain confidential (i.e. it would not be made known to third parties) and that the utmost priority would be given to their privacy. No information in relation to the identity of any individual (such as name, age and school of attendance) would form part of the research.
- Participants were assured of their right to *privacy and security* of the data. No data relating to any participant would accidentally fall into the possession of a third party or become public in any way. Care would be taken by the researcher not to enter into casual discussion with any third parties in relation to information gained from the questionnaires. No link would be made between the results of the research and the participants' schools.

5.4.7 Statistical Analysis

The statistical analysis of the questionnaires was conducted using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) program. The study used a descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics used were:

1. Frequencies, showing the number of cases taking place in the research;
2. Percentages, showing the number of cases taking place in the research in a percentage form;
3. Mean, showing the mean-average value of a set of numbers;
4. Standard deviation, which is a measure of the dispersal of a set of numbers, showing the variation of data about the mean;
5. Range, which is the difference between the lowest and highest values.

In the qualitative data analysis, the interviews were first transcribed literally in Arabic and then fully translated into English. A Microsoft Word document was developed for every interview. Therefore, transcription of the interviews was a two-phase process of

transcription and translation. The translation was carried out by the researcher with additional help from a bilingual colleague in the UAE University, who has proficiency in both the Arabic and English languages and experience in translation.

Blaikie (2000) reminds us that qualitative data analysis encompasses participants' views, in addition to process and context, whilst its goal is to identify links between the variables, patterns and themes that emerge. In order to achieve coherent data analysis, an interpretation of such data must be undertaken.

Therefore, it was necessary for the qualitative data taken from the transcripts to be categorised into variables, patterns and themes by the researcher. This is known as 'coding'. Following Miles and Huberman (1994), as this process of coding is undertaken, it is possible for the researcher to correlate the collected data against hypotheses and to reshape data collection approaches where deemed appropriate. Neuman (2006) describes such coding as the taking of raw data and the classifying of it in terms of conceptual categories, whereupon the themes that exist can be identified in order for analysis to be undertaken.

It is only then that the collected data is ready for analysis. The data collected via the questionnaires and the interviews – quantitative and qualitative data – were subjected to the following steps by the researcher, in accordance with Laws et al. (2003:395) in order for this process to be undertaken effectively:

- Step 1: In order to fully comprehend all the information that had been gathered, and thereby make the analysis process more straightforward and manageable, it was necessary for the researcher to read and reread all the collected data.
- Step 2: To enable coding to take place, a preliminary list of the themes arising from the data was composed, in accordance with Miles and Huberman (1994) and Neuman (2006) above.
- Step 3: In order to avoid mistakes and ensure validity, the data was reread several times at this stage, to clarify the themes that had emerged.

- Step 4: It was then possible for the researcher to link the various identified themes to quotations and notes by further scrutiny of the data whilst noting applicable themes alongside the quotations and notes.
- Step 5: Upon further scrutiny and interpretation of the meanings of the various theme categories, intelligible conclusions could be drawn.

It is noteworthy that, in order not to disclose the name of the schools, and for the purpose of statistical numerical coding, it was necessary that descriptor codes be ascribed to each participant school. As 30 schools were involved, each school was assigned a number between 1 and 30 for this purpose. Similarly, individual respondents were assigned an alpha-numerical code (e.g. SP1, SP2) based on their roles within the schools. An additional section of code was then added to locate where in the interview transcript the quote was located (e.g. SP1Q1, SP1Q2). It can be seen that SP1Q1 could be said to refer to 'School Principal 1, Question 1'. This practice of coding offers anonymity to the schools and individuals involved in the research, by enabling the descriptor codes to be used in the research as opposed to their real names (Chambers, 2009).

5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to examine the critical factors that affect any research design, upon which the researcher must clearly elucidate. These factors are: (1) the philosophical position of the researcher, (2) the adoption of the methodology (strategy) and (3) the methods of data collection and analysis.

This chapter began by examining the main paradigmatic positions found in the literature, namely post-positivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory, pragmatism and so forth, in order to build a case for the researcher's choice of pragmatism and mixed methods. The researcher examined the mixed-methods approach in order to justify the use of this method as the most appropriate inquiry approach, and the use of the survey method, in particular, as the main tool for data collection, in the first stage of this study. This section has outlined the emergence of the questionnaire used to collect all relevant data. In the second stage of the research, the interview method was utilised and an explanation about how the interview questions were developed followed.

Then the researcher embarked upon clarification of the quantitative part of the study, discussing how quantitative data were collected (the survey dataset is displayed and analysed in Chapter Six) and looking at how validity and reliability issues were addressed. The qualitative part of the study included discussions concerning the procedures of qualitative data collection (the results of interviews are presented and analysed in Chapter Seven) followed by a discussion of the validity of the findings.

In the next chapter, a detailed quantitative and descriptive analysis of the results of the questionnaire will be undertaken using the aforementioned parameters – that is the means, frequencies, percentages and standard deviations, where possible.

CHAPTER SIX : ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore the definitions and characteristics of effective secondary schools in the UAE context, the qualities of effective school leaders, the strategies for improving school effectiveness, and the professional needs for school leadership from the perspectives of stakeholders (principals, teachers, students and parents). This study employed quantitative data analysis to discern the broad trends of stakeholders' perceptions and the significance of their general perceptions. The questionnaire played a prominent role in collecting data from 462 participants. The analysis of data in the present chapter will hopefully shed light on the differences and similarities that might arise from the four groups of participants. Therefore, this chapter addresses the results of the quantitative dataset, which will further be cross-validated with those stemming from the interviews conducted with the school principals in the next chapter.

6.2 The Questionnaire

In the present study, a questionnaire was used to collect data from the teachers, principals or deputy principals, students and parents of the schools (see Appendix 1). The questionnaire was designed to collect the respondents' views of their schools for two reasons. First, to determine and understand the perceptions held about the "effective school" and "effective leadership" and second, to use this learning to identify strategies for improving schools, and the professional as well as the educational needs of secondary school principals. The participants' responses would later provide a systematic background for the interviews conducted at a later stage.

Formally, the questionnaire started with demographic information (Part A) about the four groups of stakeholders, followed by five sections covering different areas of school effectiveness. The second section is divided into two parts. Part B1 focuses on stakeholders' perceptions regarding the definitions of effective schools. Part B2 investigates five types of effective school factors: school factors (16 statements), teaching and learning factors (12 statements), student factors (7 statements), school-home relationship factors (7 statements), and local community factors (6 statements). The third section of the questionnaire (Part C) covers the qualities of effective leadership (17

statements), while the fourth section (Part D) covers issues associated with strategies in improving school effectiveness (18 statements). The final section (Part E) focuses on collecting the views of school principals and teachers regarding professional development for school leaders (14 statements).

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software was used to quantify and analyse the dataset collected from the questionnaire. In this chapter, the researcher adopted the descriptive statistics method using frequencies and percentages to get the broad trend of stakeholders' responses as a first step, and then, as a second step, looked at the means and standard deviations to find out the strength of agreement in terms of their importance across the samples.

At a glance, the basic statistic concepts used in this thesis, a frequency distribution, shows us how the scores distribute; that is, how closely bunched together or how spread out the scores are; which scores are most frequent and which scores are less frequent. This offers the researcher an insight into the real dynamic of situations and people (Cohen et al, 2007). So, what does a frequency distribution tell us about the collected numeric data?. The frequency reflects the number of times a particular item/ sub-factor has been observed to occur, whereas the mean representing the average performance of a group or the centre of the group (Lodico et al., 2010: 61). Mean is used in this study to find out the strength of agreement across the samples' responses regarding all effective school factors. The Standard Deviation (SD) is a measure of the extent to which the values in a distribution cluster around the mean (Muijs, 2004: 107). Based on the mean levels, it is possible to obtain the most and least important factors according to stakeholders' perceptions. In accordance with the mean, the standard deviation is used to find out the average distance between each of the scores in a distribution. So, one way to describe variability is to consider on average how far each score is from that centre score. It is called the standard deviation, because it represents the average amount by which the scores deviate from a mean.

It is significant that the Likert Scale was used to mark the questionnaires' statements by adapting different formats such as:

- Level of agreement where, for example, 1 = strongly disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (A) and 5 = strongly agree (SA).

- Level of importance where, 1 = not important (NI), 2 = little importance (LI), 3 = moderately important (MI), 4 = very important (VI) and 5 = extremely important (EI)

It is noteworthy that a 5-point Likert-type scale, from "extremely important" to "not important", are used to distinguish between the views of the respondents, and, for the purpose of analysing mean values, statistics are rounded up. The means that the perceptions of the four groups are represented using the following scheme: from 0.00 to 1.00 = not important, from 1.01 to 2.00 = little importance, from 2.01 to 3.00 = moderately important, from 3.01 to 4.00 = very important and from 4.01 to 5.00 = extremely important. Due to the size of the dataset used in this chapter, tables with the main bulk of the quantitative data are displayed as appropriate in the appendices, and the sequence of the study results will appear according to the initial order of study questions as follows:

6.3. Effective School Definitions

Question1- What is the meaning of school effectiveness and what is an Effective School according to the opinions of each category of stakeholder's (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?

6.3.1 Full Sample's Perceptions

The first section of the questionnaire (Part B1) focused on stakeholders' level of agreement with four different definitions of school effectiveness. These definitions are as follows:

1. An effective school focuses mostly on academic success
2. An effective school supports the development of good citizens
3. An effective school ensures that graduates have the skills needed to find employment
4. An effective school supports the development of an understanding of Islamic principles

All participants were requested to rate these definitions according to a five-point Likert scale where (5) means 'strongly agree' and (1) means 'strongly disagree'. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) were used to find out which definition is appropriate for each group. For this, the global perceptions of the full

sample are addressed first, followed by a detailed picture of the perception of individual groups. The mean response of both the full sample and the individual groups for each definition are considered a strong indicator for the findings of this section. Table 6.1 below shows the descriptive statistics of the full sample perception for various definitions of effective schools, in terms of levels of agreement with each definition.

Table 6 1 Descriptive statistics of the full sample’s perception for effective schools definitions in terms of level of agreement

#	Effective School Definitions	SA		A		N		D		SD		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%		
1	An effective school focuses mostly on academic success	279	60%	162	35%	17	4%	0	0%	4	1%	4.60	0.53
2	An effective school supports the development of good citizens	325	70%	125	27%	8	2%	0	0%	4	1%	4.64	0.60
3	An effective school ensures that graduates have the skills needed to find employment	304	66%	126	27%	16	3%	12	3%	4	1%	4.55	0.56
4	An effective school supports the development of an understanding of Islamic principles	384	83%	70	15%	4	1%	0	0%	4	1%	4.77	0.46

Using analysis of the means of participants’ responses, ranging from 4.55 to 4.77, effective schools’ definition clearly encompasses the four statements postulated in the questionnaire. Standard deviation values indicate that the full sample responses are clustered round the means, reflecting a high level of agreement in the participants’ views.

However, the analysis of frequencies and means of the full sample’s perceptions regarding these four definitions indicate that some are unequally rated in terms of importance. For example, 83% of participants agreed that item 4 - about Islamic principles – could best define effective schools. This indicates that the full sample considered Islamic instructions and principles as the core task of effective schools. Such orientation might be understood in the UAE, where people are still conservative and work on preserving their national and local culture. This could be attributed to a defensive state in the face of globalisation that swept up much of the national culture during the last three decades. Of course, the need for an international workforce led the country to open windows for multicultural society brought in through international firms and expatriates.

The second priority for stakeholders lies in item 2 - about the development of good citizens. This indicates that there is also an apparent agreement between participants regarding the appropriateness of this definition for effective schools. Such an agreement reflects the stakeholders' concern about the ability of schools to raise children on good citizenship values, whereupon it is possible to build academic success. In other words, stakeholders indicated that effective schools should primarily play the role of a social institution before emphasising students' academic needs.

60% of stakeholders relegated student academic success to a third position compared to emphasising Islamic and social roles of these schools. The low level of disagreement across the full sample's responses ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.53$) regarding this item indicates that such academic success is of no less importance for effective schools. By and large, it is an ipso facto task schools have to set as an objective.

The last priority for most stakeholders (66%) lies in item 3, with apparent agreement that ensuring graduates have the skills needed to find employment is an important task of effective schools. This reflects awareness that employability is a crucial matter, and that schools are the source of knowledge and skills that the country needs to replace the international expatriate workforce by national professionals.

6.3.2 Sub Samples' Perceptions

In this section, the views of various groups regarding the definitions of effective schools will be displayed in terms of similarities or differences in their perceptions for this purpose, the means and standard deviations will be used as indicators of the groups' level of agreement with the definitions provided, and the priority each group allocated for effective schools out of the proposed definitions.

Table 6.2 shows the descriptive statistics of the level of agreement with each of ES definitions from the viewpoint of the different groups. Hence, item 4 – about Islamic principles - is perceived as the highest priority for the four groups (parents, principals, students and teachers). This highlights a cautious position regarding globalisation and openness to the outer world, in addition to a conservative attitude regarding the preservation of Islamic principles and values. It is clear that the standard deviation values reveal agreement across the groups that item 4 is perceived as the best to define effective

schools in the UAE, for the reasons mentioned above in the full sample's perception section.

Item 2, about the development of good citizens – is rated by the four groups as the second most important definition. Like the full sample, the participants believe that raising children to be good citizens is a major task for any effective school. This definition could be consistent with the first priority mentioned above, since stakeholders seemed to focus on the social role of school more than on its academic mission. Perhaps stakeholders, in this sense, are concerned more with the civic, ethical and cultural values that seem to be jeopardised. Hence, raising students to be good citizens would potentially enhance both schools and students to achieve academic success and prepare generations for better future life.

Table 6 2 Descriptive statistics of groups' perceptions for effective schools definitions in terms of level of agreement

#	Effective Schools Definitions	Sample	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
			Fq	%	Fq	%	Fq	%	Fq	%	Fq	%		
1	An effective school focuses mostly on academic success	Teachers	51	38%	75	55%	6	4%	0	0%	4	3%	4.29	0.75
		Principals	25	54%	18	39%	3	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.61	0.49
		Students	105	74%	32	23%	5	4%	0	0%	0	0%	4.77	0.42
		Parents	98	71%	37	27%	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	4.73	0.44
2	An effective school supports the development of good citizens	Teachers	72	53%	52	38%	8	6%	0	0%	4	3%	4.38	0.84
		Principals	30	65%	16	35%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.65	0.48
		Students	119	84%	23	16%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.90	0.30
		Parents	104	75%	34	25%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.64	0.76
3	An effective school ensures that graduates have the skills needed to find employment	Teachers	71	52%	48	35%	9	7%	8	6%	0	0%	4.35	0.84
		Principals	11	24%	30	65%	1	2%	4	9%	0	0%	4.09	0.78
		Students	125	88%	14	10%	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%	4.84	0.37
		Parents	97	70%	34	25%	3	2%	0	0%	4	3%	4.93	0.25
4	An effective school supports the development of an understanding of Islamic principles	Teachers	85	63%	43	32%	4	3%	0	0%	4	3%	4.51	0.82
		Principals	42	91%	4	9%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.91	0.28
		Students	128	90%	14	10%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.9	0.3
		Parents	129	93%	9	7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.75	0.43

Table 6.2 shows that definitions 1 and 3 are attributed less priority compared to promoting Islamic principles (item 4) and good citizenship (item 2). While the great majority of teachers, students and parents defined an effective school as that which “*ensures that graduates have the skills needed to find employment*” (item 3), principals did not perceive it as extremely important. This finding indicated that the four groups - especially the principals - are not worried about the students’ future professional life, presumably because they might not face serious problems in joining the workforce of the UAE, in light of the large number of expatriates currently available who could be smoothly replaced by nationals in future.

Item 1, “academic success” is not rated as an equally extremely important factor of school effectiveness by most participants, especially teachers and students. Principals and parents relegated it to third position. Standard deviation values indicate that these various groups might have taken this position because they believe that all schools should ipso facto focus on this mission whether they are effective or not. In other words, they believe that school effectiveness could not be considered from this perspective, because the natural role of all schools is to enhance students’ academic success, regardless of their level of effectiveness.

6.3.3 Summary of Effective School Definitions

In light of the aforementioned discussion of the stakeholders’ perceptions of a definition of an effective school items 1 to 4 are found to be complementary rather than discrete or isolated, where each definition complemented the other and none of them could be excluded, according to stakeholders. However, the participants’ perceptions indicated that these definitions are different in terms of priority, and that the following order could best describe effective schools, where item number 1 refers to the preferred definition, while 4 refers to the least preferred:

1. An effective school supports the development of an understanding of Islamic principles (item 4).
2. An effective school supports the development of good citizens (item 2).
3. An effective school ensures that graduates have the skills needed to find employment (item 3).
4. An effective school focuses mostly on academic success (item 1).

6.4 Effective School Factors

Question 2- What are the characteristics that contribute to effective schools as perceived by stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE? Are there any characteristics of effective schools that are more important than others for school effectiveness according to the opinions of each stakeholder, and if so, why?

This section (Part B2 of the questionnaire) is designed to find out the stakeholders' perceptions about the characteristics that could contribute to school effectiveness, which are categorised into five types: school factors, teaching and learning factors, student factors, school-home relationship factors and local community factors. The selection of these factors is consistent with the literature on analysing quantitative data (Sammons, 1999; MacBeath & Mortimore, 2001; Townsend, 2007; MacBeath et al, 2007; Townsend & MacBeath, 2011). Further, the findings are also considered in terms of the frequency of participants' responses to various schools; that is, the highest and lowest means corresponding to each factor are reported with the highest and/or lowest percentages of stakeholders' responses. The level of importance perceived by stakeholders is also subject to validation by the researcher's relevant understanding and experience in current local schooling systems and stakeholders' attitudes toward SE. Distribution of responses (Standard Deviation) around the means for each factor is addressed to find out the level of agreement between the sample's responses, with specific focus on the most and least important factors.

For methodological purposes, the sample's perceptions (full and sub samples) for each type of effective school factors will be displayed in terms of their level of importance. A discussion of the similarities and differences across various groups' perceptions regarding each type of effective school (ES) factors will be presented before summarising each section. Due to the large amount of quantitative data represented by the responses of the sub-samples to the various types of school factors, tables of this data will be displayed in the appendices, so as to be accessible and manageable for the reader to better understand the quantitative data addressed.

Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages) are used to find out the highest and lowest important ES factors for each type as perceived by stakeholders. The highest and least important factors are identified according to the highest

means and frequencies of participants' responses to these characteristics. In order to shed light on the spread of stakeholders' responses to all factors, standard deviation for related responses is discussed. Henceforth, in the following sections the findings concerning each school factor type will be displayed, first based on the full sample responses, then on the subsample responses. For consistency purposes, to paint a picture of the common prevailing perceptions among the participants regarding the various school effectiveness factors, the researcher followed the same data analysis methods across the questionnaire parts. This means that, in order to find out the most and least important factors from the perspective of stakeholders, an analysis of mean responses of participants were conducted. The three highest means of the full sample responses are considered strong indicators of the most important effective school characteristics, while the three lowest means of the full sample responses are viewed as the least important school factors. Further, the findings are also considered in terms of the frequency of participants' responses to various school factors i.e., the highest and lowest means of each factor are reported with the highest and/or lowest percentages of stakeholders' responses. Distribution of responses (Standard Deviation) around the means for each factor is addressed to find out the level of agreement between the sample's responses, with specific focus on the most and least important factors.

6.3.1. School Factors

6.3.1.1. Full Sample Responses

Table 6.3 shows the descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to school factors rated in terms of their level of importance. It indicates that all school factors are viewed by stakeholders as either extremely important, with means ranging from 4.24 to 4.43, or very important, with means ranging from 4.07 to 4.20. As mentioned earlier in this research (Methodology of the study, chapter 5), the length of each set of sub-factors is considered in light of its range as follows:

$$\text{Range} = \text{max} - \text{min} = (5 - 1 = 4)$$

Hence, two sets of factors are identified by most participants as mentioned above (extremely important or very important). The first set (all items except 8, 9, 10 and 15) is considered extremely important, ranging in terms of means from 4.24 to 4.43, and the

second set is considered very important (items 8, 9, 10, 15), with means ranging from 4.07 to 4.20.

Table 6 3 Descriptive statistics of participant’ responses to school factors in terms of importance level

#	SCHOOL FACTORS	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	%		
1	There is a clear vision for the school	187	40%	244	53%	21	5%	10	2%	0	0%	4.38	0.60
2	Teachers know what they are supposed to do	212	46%	234	51%	16	3%	0	0%	0	0%	4.30	0.87
3	Staff are committed	219	47%	229	50%	4	1%	10	2%	0	0%	4.28	0.98
4	The curriculum is appropriate	160	35%	242	52%	45	10%	15	3%	0	0%	4.37	0.73
5	There is an effective discipline policy	204	44%	233	50%	20	4%	5	1%	0	0%	4.31	0.88
6	The school has a clear plan for development	227	49%	235	51%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.43	0.64
7	Teachers obtain good support from senior staff	201	44%	232	50%	29	6%	0	0%	0	0%	4.24	0.86
8	The school is accountable to parents and families	204	44%	231	50%	22	5%	0	0%	5	1%	4.20	0.86
9	Excellence is rewarded	158	34%	213	46%	76	16%	10	2%	5	1%	4.07	0.99
10	The school offers co-curricular activities	144	31%	244	53%	64	14%	10	2%	0	0%	4.08	0.94
11	Teachers use professional development to improve their teaching	201	44%	230	50%	26	6%	0	0%	5	1%	4.37	0.61
12	The school conforms to UAE heritage and culture	231	50%	226	49%	0	0%	0	0%	5	1%	4.39	0.64
13	School buildings and resources are used well	200	43%	230	50%	32	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.37	0.58
14	There is a good relationship between staff and students	223	48%	229	50%	5	1%	5	1%	0	0%	4.39	0.83
15	The school evaluates its progress	167	36%	217	47%	74	16%	4	1%	0	0%	4.18	0.88
16	Counseling services are provided	200	43%	196	42%	44	10%	22	5%	0	0%	4.27	0.90

The analysis of frequencies in table 6.3 shows that the most important school factors as perceived by stakeholders are reflected by the three highest means of participants’

responses are items 6, “*The school has a clear plan for development*”, 12 “*The school conforms to UAE heritage and culture*” and 14 “*There is a good relationship between staff and students*” with means of ($M= 4.43, SD = 0.64$; $M= 4.39, SD =0.64$ and $M= 4.39, SD =0.83$ respectively). Most responses are concentrated around the means of these responses, except for item 14 regarding the importance of good relations between staff and students, with a standard deviation = 0.83 indicating wider deviation from the mean than other items.

The high level of agreement on the most important ES factors shows that the stakeholders prioritised planning for development, promoting students’ awareness of their local culture and enhancing good relations among the school community.

On the other hand, the analysis of frequencies, along with the means and standard deviation values show that items 9 “*Excellence is rewarded*”, 10 “*The school offers co-curricular activities*” and 15 “*The school evaluates its progress*” are perceived as relatively less important, since around one third of stakeholders (34%, 31% and 36% respectively) believe that these items are extremely important, and around half of them (46%, 53% and 47% respectively) reported that they are very important. This suggests that the stakeholders considered that rewarding excellence, offering co-curricular activities for students and evaluating school progress are less interesting than other ES characteristics, because stakeholders in the UAE usually focus on broader and more strategic school goals than such subtasks.

6.3.1.2. Sub-Samples’ Perceptions

The analysis of the sub-sample’s responses indicates that school factors are perceived differently in terms of their level of importance. The frequency of teachers’ responses indicates that more than half of this group believe that these factors are extremely important for SE, with percentages of (57%, 51% and 51% respectively), and more than one third of this group believe these items are very important, with percentages of (40%, 43% and 40% respectively). Teachers believe that items 5 “*There is an effective discipline policy*”, 8 “*The school is accountable to parents and families*” and 13 “*School buildings and resources are used well*” are extremely important, with highest means of ($M= 4.41, SD = 0.90$; $M= 4.40, SD =0.93$ and $M= 4.42, SD = 0.84$ respectively). The distribution of teachers’ responses to these items showed that it is apparently scattered to some extent

away from the means, a fact that reflects some disagreement between teachers on the level of importance of each of these factors.

This finding indicates that teachers are concerned with the implementation of a proactive classroom management and discipline policy engaging both schools and parents. Teachers also believe that effective schools should pay special attention to using their physical resources effectively. No less important for teachers are the items 9 (rewarding Excellence), offering co-curricular activities (item 10) and providing Counselling services (item 16) (Appendix B1).

As for the principals, the distribution of their responses to these factors is clustered round the means, which indicates a high level of agreement on the importance of these factors. Frequencies of principals' responses to these items indicated that around half of the sample (54%, 54% and 46%) believes that these factors are extremely important, and around half of participants (46%, 46% and 54% respectively) believe these items to be very important for SE. Principals appeared to be aware of the importance of planning, professional development and good relations among school community members for any effective school.

Standard deviation values indicate that there is a high level of agreement between principals on the importance level of these factors, since the distribution of principals' responses are concentrated round the means. Principals' responses are consistent with the full sample's responses, in that they gave less priority for incentives, school vision and resources. This finding could be attributed to principals' belief that such factors are likely to be already obtained by many current schools, whether they are effective or not. Therefore, they might be of less priority than other factors mentioned above. (Appendix B2)

Distribution of students' responses to these items indicated that they are clustered around the means, which reflected the sample's high level of agreement in this regard. Frequencies of student responses to these items supported this finding, with (44%, 60% and 51% respectively) of students believing that these items are extremely important, and (56%, 40% and 42%) of the sample believing they are very important. This finding revealed students' awareness of the high importance level of planning for development, local culture and school resources for ES.

However, students' responses are apparently scattered away from the means, which reflected a high level of disagreement between participants on the importance of these items. This finding is supported by the analysis of frequencies, which indicated that (42%, 39% and 36% respectively) of students believe that these factors are extremely important, while most students believe they are very important. This finding indicated that students gave less priority and importance to the role of parents, extracurricular activities and evaluation issues for SE (Appendix B3).

Parents' frequencies of responses to these items indicated that (47%, 43% and 51% respectively) believe that these factors are extremely important,, and (49%, 49% and 49% respectively) believe these items to be very important for SE. Standard deviation values indicate that there is also a relatively high level of disagreement between parents on the importance level of these factors, since the distribution of their responses is scattered away from the means. Parents' responses indicate that they gave less priority to supporting teacher, incentives or extracurricular activities than any other factors. This finding could be understood in light of the current public support and rewards whether schools are effective or not (Appendix B4).

6.3.1.3. Similarities and Differences

In light of the findings on school factors presented above, participants rated these factors differently in terms of importance for school effectiveness. Table 6.4 below shows the most and three least important school factors perceived by the full sample and individual groups. The most and least important factors are considered in light of the highest and lowest means of participants' responses. Therefore, a comparison of various groups' responses is necessary to shed light on similarities or differences between the perceptions of these groups. This process would enable the researcher to address relevant questions in the later phases of the study, especially in the interview phase and in discussing the results. The letter (M) beside each factor refers to the 'most' important item perceived by a relevant sample according to the highest mean of that sample responses, while the letter (L) refers to the 'least' important one.

Table 6 4 Most and least important school factors according to the highest and lowest means of stakeholders' responses

#	School Factors	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
1	There is a clear vision for the school			L		M
2	Teachers know what they are supposed to do					
3	Staff are committed					
4	The curriculum is appropriate					M
5	There is an effective discipline policy		M			
6	The school has a clear plan for development	M		M	M	
7	Teachers obtain good support from senior staff					L
8	The school is accountable to parents and families		M		L	
9	Excellence is rewarded	L	L	L		L
10	The school offers co-curricular	L	L		L	L
11	Teachers use professional development to improve their teaching			M		
12	The school conforms to UAE heritage	M			M	
13	School buildings and resources are used well		M	L	M	
14	There is a good relationship between staff and students	M		M		M
15	The school evaluates its progress	L			L	
16	Counseling services are provided		L			

Table 6.4 above indicates that the full sample, especially principals and students, agreed on the high level of importance for effective schools to have a clear plan for development, in addition to systematic planning of their activities (item 6). The full sample - especially students - agreed on the high importance of emphasising national culture and heritage (item 12), a fact that demonstrates a deep concern with preserving the national culture at schools. Furthermore, the full sample, namely principals and parents, strongly believe that effective schools should build good relations between staff and students (item 14). Teachers and students reported that school building and resources should be well used by any effective school. Their agreement on the importance of this factor might be due to their daily use of school resources, without which the achievement of teaching and learning outcomes could be difficult.

Although these factors are considered most important by various samples, other similar highly-rated factors are not considered of similar importance. These factors are 'effective disciplinary policy' and 'accountability towards families' as perceived by teachers,

‘professional development of teachers’ as perceived by principals, and finally ‘school vision’ and “appropriateness of curriculum” rated by parents.

On the other hand, the item ‘rewarding excellence’ is of lowest priority for stakeholders, with the lowest mean of responses, except for students. This could be accounted for by the stakeholders’ underestimation of the role of rewards that are likely to enhance extrinsic motivation of various educational parties. All the same, offering ‘extra-curricular activities’ also received less attention than other factors by stakeholders, except principals. This could be attributed to the extensive formal curriculum provided in public schools.

6.3.1.4 Summary of School Factors Findings

In light of the findings mentioned above, there is no full agreement across groups’ responses on the most and least important school factors. The comparison and contrast between samples’ rating of various school factors indicates that there are some similarities and differences in groups’ perceptions regarding the importance of some school factors. Anyhow, according to the highest means of stakeholders’ responses, the following factors are the most important for effective school:

1. The school has a clear plan for development,
2. The school conforms to UAE heritage and culture
3. There is a good relationship between staff and students.

On the other hand, the following factors are the least important

1. Excellence is rewarded
2. The school offers co-curricular activities
3. The school evaluates its progress.

6.3.2. Teaching and Learning Factors

6.3.1.1. Full Sample Responses to Teaching and Learning Factors

An analysis of the mean responses of participants was conducted in order to find out the most and least important teaching and learning factors from the perspective of

stakeholders. Table 6.5 below shows the descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to teaching and learning as rated by the full sample.

Table 6 5 Descriptive statistics of stakeholders' responses to teaching and learning factors in terms of importance level

#	TEACHING AND LEARNING FACTORS	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
1	The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity	260	56%	155	34%	32	7%	8	2%	7	2%	4.47	0.87
2	There is an appropriate environment for learning	264	57%	149	32%	30	6%	7	2%	12	3%	4.48	0.79
3	There is a challenging and attractive atmosphere for learning.	234	51%	167	36%	39	8%	14	3%	8	2%	4.38	0.83
4	Teachers emphasise core knowledge and skills	215	47%	189	41%	43	9%	9	2%	6	1%	4.32	0.80
5	Teachers expect students to learn	219	47%	186	40%	39	8%	4	1%	14	3%	4.37	0.78
6	Learning is monitored	207	45%	181	39%	58	13%	6	1%	10	2%	4.31	0.83
7	Teachers support a range of classroom learning activities	230	50%	164	35%	52	11%	11	2%	5	1%	4.21	0.81
8	Teachers support extracurricular activity	216	47%	175	38%	54	12%	5	1%	12	3%	4.29	0.87
9	Teachers provide positive feedback	225	49%	180	39%	43	9%	9	2%	5	1%	4.37	0.78
10	Class time and resources are used well	227	49%	183	40%	39	8%	6	1%	7	2%	4.38	0.83
11	Teachers emphasise pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social, etc. development	238	52%	165	36%	45	10%	9	2%	5	1%	4.42	0.81
12	Teachers are committed and well qualified	246	53%	168	36%	26	6%	14	3%	8	2%	4.47	0.87

Table 6.5 indicates that all teaching and learning factors are extremely important for the full sample, with means ranging from 4.21 to 4.48, and that the most important teaching and learning factors as perceived by stakeholders are items 2 “*There is an appropriate environment for learning*”, 1 “*The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity*, and 12 “*Teachers are committed and well qualified*”. This is supported by the analysis of

frequencies, indicating that nearly half of the participants believe that these items are extremely important. The analysis of frequencies also indicate that more than half of stakeholders perceived these factors as extremely important, and around one-third believe that these items are very important for SE. Few participants reported these items as of moderate importance.

This reveals that stakeholders think that effective schools should provide students with an appropriate learning environment, Islamic teaching and culture, and a dedicated staff so that they could maximise students' achievement. In fact, this finding could be attributed to the nature of stakeholders, who are affected by the UAE local educational context, which focuses more on healthy learning environment, national culture, identity, and dedicated staff, than any other academic issues.

6.3.1.2. Sub-Samples Responses to Teaching and Learning Factors

As in the school factors' section above, the data collected about the responses of the sub-samples to the teaching and learning factors are presented in the appendices, while findings and comments will be addressed in the following sections. The analysis of the sub-sample's responses indicated that teaching and learning factors are perceived differently in terms of their level of importance. For example, out of the full sample, the teachers believe that items 1 "*The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity*", 2 "*There is an appropriate environment for learning*" and 12 "*Teachers are committed and well qualified*" are extremely important, with highest means of ($M= 4.48, SD = 0.916$; $M= 4.52, SD =0.819$ and $M= 4.51, SD =0.857$ respectively). The frequency of teachers' responses indicated that more than half of this group believe that these factors are extremely important for SE, and around one-third of this group believe these items are very important. See (Appendix C1).

This finding indicated that teachers strongly believe that effective schools should emphasise national identity and Islamic teachings, provide high quality learning atmosphere for students and recruit highly qualified teachers.

Principals believe that items 1 "*The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity*", 2 "*There is an appropriate environment for learning*" and 3 "*There is a challenging and attractive atmosphere for learning*" are extremely important, with highest means of ($M= 4.75, SD =$

0.50; $M= 4.81$, $SD =0.40$ and $M= 4.72$, $SD =0.45$ respectively). The distribution of their responses to these factors is clustered round the means, which indicated a high level of agreement between principals on the high level of importance of these factors. Frequencies of principals' responses to these items indicated that most believe that these factors are extremely important, and almost all remaining participants believe these items to be very important for SE. This finding indicated that, like the teachers and the full sample, principals highlighted the high importance of promoting Islamic and national identity, and providing students with a suitable and interesting learning atmosphere.

On the other hand, principals considered some factors of less importance, such as items 7 "*Teachers support a range of classroom learning activities*", 8 "*Teachers support extracurricular activity*" and 10 "*Class time and resources are used well*", with lowest means of ($M= 4.41$, $SD = 0.549$; $M= 4.53$, $SD =0.654$ and $M= 4.47$, $SD = 0.696$ respectively). Standard deviation values indicate that there is a high level of agreement between principals on the importance level of these factors, since the distribution of principals' responses is concentrated round the means. Principals' responses gave less priority to focusing on learning inside classroom, whether curriculum or extra-curricular based. Principals are also less interested in the importance of class time than other factors. This trend of principals might be due to their awareness of the broader goals of effective schools, including the promotion of identity and learning environment, rather than specific tasks like class time or learning activities (Appendix C2).

Students believe that items 5 "*Teachers expect students to learn*", 11, "*Teachers emphasize pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social, etc. development*" and 12, "*Teachers are committed and well qualified*" are important, as mirrored by the means and frequencies of students' responses. This demonstrates the fact that students rely heavily on the role of teachers in promoting their learning and consequently SE. For them, real qualified teachers are those who raise their expectations and promote various aspects of students' development.

Nevertheless, according to the students, some school factors are of less importance for SE than other items mentioned above. For example, items 4 "*Teachers emphasise core knowledge and skills*", 6 "*Learning is monitored*" and 7 "*Teachers support a range of classroom learning activities*" are not extremely important, with lower means of ($M= 4.12$, $SD = 1.72$; $M= 4.08$, $SD =0.967$ and $M= 4.13$, $SD = 0.938$ respectively). This indicates

that students gave less priority and importance to class learning activities and monitoring than other items mentioned above for SE (Appendix C3).

Parents' perceptions do not considerably differ from those of the full sample. The highest three means indicate that the most important teaching and learning factors are items 1 "*The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity*", 2 "*There is an appropriate environment for learning*" and 12 "*Teachers are committed and well qualified*", with means of ($M = 4.37$, $SD = 0.962$; $M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.859$ and $M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.989$ respectively) and frequency percentages of (58%, 50% and 47% respectively). Only one-third of parents believe that these items are less important for SE, with percentages of (30%, 37% and 42% respectively). It would be not strange if parents and the full sample agreed on the most important teaching and learning factors, since both types of samples are affected by the educational context, which focused more on strategic goals of schooling including loyalty to Islamic and national identity, appropriate learning environment and qualified staff than other more specific goals of effective school (Appendix C4).

There is almost similar agreement between parents and full sample's responses on the least important factors. For example, parents believe that items 5 "*Teachers expect students to learn*", 6 "*Learning is monitored*", and 8 "*Teachers support extracurricular activity*" are extremely important, as reflected in the corresponding means and standard deviation values.

6.3.1.3. Similarities and Differences

The findings on teaching and learning factors indicate that participants (full and sub samples) perceived the importance level of these factors for school effectiveness differently. Table 6.6 below shows the three most and least important teaching and learning factors as perceived by the full sample and individual groups. The most and least important factors are considered in light of the highest and lowest means of participants responses.

Table 6 6 Most and least important school factors according to the highest and lowest means of stakeholders' responses

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
1	The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity	M	M	M		M

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
2	There is an appropriate environment for learning	M	M	M		M
3	There is a challenging and attractive atmosphere for learning.			M		
4	Teachers emphasise core knowledge and skills				L	
5	Teachers expect students to learn		L		M	L
6	Learning is monitored	L	L		L	L
7	Teachers support a range of classroom learning activities	L	L	L	L	
8	Teachers support extracurricular activity	L		L		L
9	Teachers provide positive feedback					
10	Class time and resources are used well			L		
11	Teachers emphasise pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social, etc. development				M	
12	Teachers are committed and well qualified	M	M		M	M

*M: most important

*L: least important

Table 6.6 above shows that there is a high level of consistency regarding the most important teaching and learning factors. For example, all sample types, except students, agreed on the high importance of promoting Islamic and Arabic identity, and providing an appropriate learning environment for ES. This consistency might be attributed to the strong attitudes of stakeholders toward the importance of Islamic culture and Arab identity for schools to ensure their effectiveness. It is believed that people in the UAE are strongly tied to their national culture, and they give priority to raising their children based on Islamic and Arab values. This social trend might have affected their views of the role of schools. Besides that, the stakeholders appear to be aware that providing students with a safe, healthy and appropriate learning environment is more important than other teaching and learning factors and that without such a learning atmosphere, students and schools would not be able to achieve their educational goals. Nevertheless, with a focus on more academic factors, students are appear to be reasonably for a well-qualified, committed and dedicated teaching staff.

Parents, students and teachers themselves sided with the students, because they believe that good quality teachers could help schools to be more effective, and could enable students to achieve their academic success. However, the principals' responses are not consistent with

other samples in this regard. A possible explanation might be that they believe most teachers are expatriates, and it could be difficult for the Ministry of Education to ensure a high quality of teachers in the UAE schools.

Table 6.6 also shows that the samples responses are homogeneous regarding the least important factors, such as monitoring learning and evaluation processes, due to a clear focus on the school environment and learning atmosphere or social values, rather than on specific instructional tasks of schools.

6.3.1.4 Summary of Teaching and Learning Factors Findings

There is apparent agreement across the groups' responses on the highest and lowest rates of teaching and learning factors in terms of their importance. The following teaching and learning factors are perceived by the full sample as the most important, with the highest means of their responses:

1. The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity
2. There is an appropriate environment for learning
3. Teachers are committed and well qualified.

On the other hand, the following teaching and learning factors are perceived by the full sample as the least important with the lowest means of their responses:

1. Learning is monitored
2. Teachers support a range of classroom learning
3. Teachers support extracurricular activity.

6.3.3. Student Factors

6.3.3.1. Full Sample Responses to Student Factors

Table 6.7 below shows the descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to student factors as rated by the full sample.

Table 6 7 Descriptive statistics of participant’ responses to student factors in terms of importance level

#	STUDENT FACTORS	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
1	Teachers emphasise the positive behaviour of the students	282	61%	120	26%	41	9%	10	2%	9	2%	4.51	0.85
2	Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential	277	60%	128	28%	32	7%	15	3%	10	2%	4.48	0.84
3	Teachers encourage a high level of student self-esteem	263	57%	136	29%	42	9%	13	3%	8	2%	4.38	0.81
4	Students are highly motivated in terms of learning	217	47%	165	36%	56	12%	11	2%	13	3%	4.29	0.91
5	Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills	211	46%	181	39%	55	12%	7	2%	8	2%	4.35	0.85
6	There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all	240	52%	166	36%	33	7%	13	3%	10	2%	4.41	0.85
7	There is the provision of effective counseling services	235	51%	159	34%	41	9%	16	3%	11	2%	4.38	0.87

The table indicates that all student factors are extremely important, with means ranging from 4.29 to 4.51. The analysis of frequencies also shows that 53% of the participants believe that these items are extremely important. The three highest means of participants’ responses indicate that the most important student factors as perceived by stakeholders are items 1 “*Teachers emphasise the positive behaviour of the students*”, 2 “*Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential*” and 6 “*There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all*” with means of ($M= 4.51, SD = 0.85$; $M= 4.48, SD =0.84$ and $M= 4.41, SD =0.85$ respectively). The analysis of frequencies also indicates that most stakeholders perceive these factors as extremely important, with percentages of (61%, 60% and 52% respectively), and a considerable number of them believe that these items are very important for SE, with percentages of (26%, 28% and 36% respectively). Few participants reported these items being of moderate importance, with percentages of (9%, 7% and 7% respectively).

Therefore, stakeholders believe that effective schools should focus on assessing students’ positive behaviour, boosting their capabilities to achieve their own goals, and providing them with equal opportunities for learning.

Items 4 “*Students are highly motivated in terms of learning*”, 5 “*Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills*” and 7 “*There is the provision of effective counselling services*” are no less important for stakeholders, with means of ($M= 4.29, SD$

= 0.91; $M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.85$ and $M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.87$ respectively). Standard deviation values for these factors indicated that there is some disagreement between stakeholders regarding the level of importance for these items for SE. The analysis of frequencies shows that almost half of stakeholders believe that these items are extremely important, and a little more than one-third of them believe that they are very important.

Generally, these factors are considered slightly less important than others mentioned above, because stakeholders believe that motivating students to learn, enhancing their learning through higher order thinking skills including creativity and evaluation abilities, and providing students with effective counselling services, all occupied less priority for ES compared to providing students with equal learning opportunities or maximising their potential, for instance.

6.3.1.2. Sub-Samples Responses to Student Factors

Similarly to previous sections, the data collected about the responses of the sub-samples to student factors are presented in the appendices, while findings and comments will be addressed in the following sections. The analysis of sub-sample responses indicates that student factors are perceived differently in terms of their level of importance. For example, within the full sample, teachers and principals believe that items 1, “*Teachers emphasise the positive behaviour of the students*”, 2, “*Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential*” and 6, “*There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all*” are of prime importance. The distribution of teachers’ responses to these three items indicated that most responses are rather scattered away from the means, which indicated a slight level of divergence in the views of the teachers on the importance level of these student factors for SE, while, in the case of the principals’ responses, the distribution is concentrated round the means, indicating a higher level of convergence.

A much smaller number of teachers believe that these items are of moderate importance, with percentages of (5%, 5% and 4% respectively). As for the frequencies of principals’ responses, it was found that more than half of principals believe that these items are extremely important, with percentages of (59%, 59% and 52% respectively), and more than one third of principals believe they are very important. This finding suggests that, like the full sample, teachers strongly believe that effective schools should emphasise students’

positive behaviour, maximise student potential and provide students with equal learning opportunities.

However, the responses of teachers, principals and parents indicated that some student factors are less important for SE than the above-mentioned, as perceived by these three groups. For example, teachers believe that item 3 “*Teachers encourage a high level of student self-esteem*” , 4 “*Students are highly motivated in terms of learning*”, and 5 “*Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills*” are important, with lowest means of ($M= 4.35$, $SD = 0.917$; $M= 4.34$, $SD =0.926$ and $M= 4.38$, $SD = 0.925$ respectively). Principals believe that these items are important, with lowest means of ($M= 4.57$, $SD = 0.471$; $M= 4.57$, $SD =0.698$ and $M= 4.54$, $SD = 0.657$ respectively), and parents believe that these factors are important, with lowest means of ($M= 4.29$, $SD = 0.859$; $M= 4.16$, $SD =0.966$ and $M= 4.23$, $SD = 0.845$ respectively). The distribution of teachers’ and parents’ responses indicates that it is scattered away from the means, which reflected disagreement between participants from these groups on the importance of these items. However, the distribution of principals’ responses is clustered around the means, which indicated a high level of consistency and agreement between principals regarding the least important student factors (Appendix D1 & D2 & D4).

Students believe that items 1, “*Teachers emphasise the positive behaviour of the students*”, 2, “*Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential*” and 3, “*Teachers encourage a high level of student self-esteem*” are important, with highest means of ($M= 4.30$, $SD = 1.0131$; $M= 4.38$, $SD =1.064$ and $M= 4.32$, $SD = 0.982$ respectively). Distribution of students’ responses to these items indicate that it is scattered far away from the means, which reflected the students’ disagreement on the importance of these student factors. Frequencies of student responses show that half this group believe that these items are extremely important, and nearly a third of the sample believes they are very important for SE. This finding indicates that students expect ES to focus on positive behaviour, promoting their potentialities and raising their self-esteem (Appendix D3).

Parents perceived all student factors as extremely important or very important. They believe that items 1, “*Teachers emphasize the positive behaviour of the students*”, 2, “*Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential*” and 7, “*There is the provision of effective counselling services*” are highly important, with means of ($M= 4.45$, $SD = 0.864$; $M= 4.40$, $SD =0.936$ and $M= 4.35$, $SD = 0.802$ respectively). Frequencies

and percentages show that more than half of parents believe that these student factors are extremely important, while nearly one third believe they are very important for SE. This finding indicates that parents expected effective schools to focus on raising students' awareness of their personal capabilities through extensive counselling services.

6.3.1.3. Similarities and Differences

Stakeholders (full and sub samples) perceived the importance of the student factors in a relative way. In light of the highest and lowest means of participants' responses, table 6.8 below shows the most and least important student factors as perceived by the full sample and individual groups.

Table 6 8 Most and least important student factors as perceived by stakeholders

#	Student factors	Full Sample (n= 462)	Teachers (n= 136)	Principals (n= 46)	Students (n= 142)	Parents (n= 138)
1	Teachers emphasise the positive behavior of the students	M	M	M	M	M
2	Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential	M	M	M	M	M
3	Teachers encourage a high level of student self-esteem		L	L	M	L
4	Students are highly motivated in terms of learning	L	L	L	L	L
5	Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills	L	L	L		L
6	There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all	M	M	M	L	
7	There is the provision of effective counseling services	L			L	M

**M: most important*

**L: least important*

Table 6.8 above shows that there is a high level of consistency regarding the most important student factors. For example, all sample types agreed on emphasising students' positive behaviour and encouraging them to maximize their potential. The full sample agreed with teachers and principals on the high level of importance for ES to provide equal learning opportunities.

The four groups did not fully agree on a couple of factors. 'encouraging students to reach their maximum potential' and 'providing counseling services' not being a matter of consensus among the groups, possibly because maximising students' potential capabilities and providing counseling services are not salient components of an effective school strategic action plan.

On the other hand, all groups believe that motivating student learning is important. All groups, except students, also agreed that promoting students' higher order thinking skills is important. This finding indicated that stakeholders are more concerned with the basic tasks of schools than with some developmental activities for students, such as raising students' awareness, developing their self-esteem, and providing counseling services.

It is noticed that there are two contradictions in the findings: the first related to teachers' encouragement of students' self-esteem, which is perceived by students as one of the most important student factors, according to the highest mean response, while other groups viewed this factor as one of the least important. This could be because students are concerned with their personal development. The second is counseling services, which are perceived by parents as one of the most important, while other groups such as the full sample and students viewed it as less important. This difference in perception between parents and other groups might be attributed to their different understanding of the importance of these services for SE.

6.3.1.4 Summary of Student Factors Findings

The responses of various samples appeared to be consistent to a certain extent regarding the importance level of some student factors for SE. The following student factors are perceived by the full sample as the most important, with the highest means of their responses:

1. Teachers emphasise the positive behavior of the students
2. Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential
3. There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all.

The following student factors are perceived by the full sample as the least important:

1. Students are highly motivated in terms of learning
2. Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills
3. There is the provision of effective counseling services.

6.3.4. School-Home Relationship Factors

6.3.4.1. Full Sample Responses to School-Home Relationship factors

Analysis of the mean responses of stakeholders and the descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to school-home relationship factors indicate that only two items, 1 and 2, are extremely important, with means ranging from 4.33 to 4.38 as shown in. Table 6.9. The analysis of frequencies indicates that nearly half of the participants believe that these items are extremely important, with an average of 55% and 52%. The rest of the factors are believed to be very important for stakeholders, with a range of means from $M= 3.92$ to $M= 4.19$.

Table 6 9 Descriptive statistics of participants' responses to school-home relationship factors in terms of importance level

#	SCHOOL-HOME RELATIONSHIP FACTORS	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
1	Parents are regularly informed about their child's progress	255	55%	124	27%	68	15%	7	2%	8	2%	4.20	0.78
2	Parents are involved in their child's learning	240	52%	144	31%	66	14%	6	1%	6	1%	4.38	0.66
3	There is an effective parent–school association	222	48%	138	30%	85	18%	12	3%	5	1%	4.19	0.82
4	Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom	172	37%	196	42%	72	16%	14	3%	8	2%	4.33	0.92
5	There is an active and supportive parents' committee	223	48%	137	30%	75	16%	18	4%	9	2%	3.98	0.93
6	Parents' days are well attended	213	46%	146	32%	77	17%	17	4%	9	2%	4.15	0.82
7	Parents are proud of the school	196	42%	157	34%	83	18%	18	4%	8	2%	3.92	0.79

The highest three means of participants' responses indicated that the most important school-home relationship factors as perceived by stakeholders are items 1 “*Parents are regularly informed about their child's progress*”, 2 “*Parents are involved in their child's learning*” and 4 “*Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom*”, with means of ($M= 4.20$, $SD = 0.78$; $M= 4.38$, $SD =0.66$ and $M= 4.33$, $SD =0.92$ respectively). Most responses are slightly dispersed away from the means, which indicates a level of disagreement between participants on the importance level of these factors for SE. The analysis of frequencies also indicated that around half of stakeholders perceived the first two factors as extremely important, with percentages of (55% and 52% respectively), and slightly more than one-third (37%) of stakeholders believe that the third factor is extremely important. A considerable number of participants believe that these items are very

important for SE, with percentages of (27%, 31% and 42% respectively). However, some participants believe that these items are of moderate importance, with percentages of (15%, 14% and 16% respectively).

According to stakeholders', parents should be regularly involved in their childrens' learning, and it is their full right to be informed about their childrens' ongoing learning progress. On the other hand, stakeholders believe that items 5 "*There is an active and supportive parents' committee*", 6 "*Parents' days are well attended*" and 7 "*Parents are proud of the school*" are less important, with means of ($M= 3.98, SD = 0.93$; $M= 4.15, SD =0.82$ and $M= 3.92, SD = 0.79$ respectively). Standard deviation values for these factors indicate that there is some disagreement between stakeholders regarding the level of importance of these items for SE. The analysis of frequencies supported this finding, in that these three factors are of less importance than the above- mentioned for SE, where almost less than half of stakeholders believe that these items are extremely important, and about one-third believe that they are very important. A smaller number of participants believe that these factors are of moderate importance, with percentages of (16%, 17% and 18% respectively). Stakeholders' responses to the least important factors indicated that they are more concerned with parental involvement through effective participation in children's learning on a regular and systematic basis, than with occasional activities like involvement in parents' committees or attending parents' days.

6.3.4.2. Sub-Samples Responses to School-Home Relationship Factors

The data collected about the responses of the sub-samples to school-home relationship factors are presented in the appendices, while findings and comments will be addressed in the following sections. Analysis of the sub-sample's responses indicates that two school-home relationship factors (items 2 and 4) have the highest means of all sample responses, and two other factors (items 5 and 7) have the lowest.

The highest means of the teachers, principals, students and parents' responses are in relation to item 2 "*Parents are involved in their child's learning*", with ($M= 4.87, SD = 0.344$; $M= 5.00, SD =0.00$, $M= 4.00, SD=1.36$ and $M= 3.64, SD = 1.168$ respectively), indicating an apparent convergence in these groups' responses, since they are mostly concentrated around the mean, while it is distributed far from the mean in the case of the students' and parents responses. The analysis of frequencies for these groups indicates that

around half of participants believe that this factor is extremely important, with percentages of (50%, 63%, 41% and 56% respectively) (Appendix E1, E2, E3, E4).

Item 4 “*Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom*” is perceived by various groups with a highest mean ranging from $M = 4.85$, $SD = 0.869$ to $M = 3.80$, $SD = 1.103$. The distribution of groups’ responses indicates that there is a level of agreement in principals’ responses, while students and parents seem to have an apparent disagreement on the importance level of this factor for SE. In fact, stakeholders are aware of the importance of parents’ involvement in their children’s learning, and the importance for parents and schools to cooperate effectively in this regard. This educational trend among stakeholders could be attributed to the rapid change in the educational system of the UAE, and the educators’ attitudes towards the role of parents in education (Appendices E1, E2, E3, E4).

The third most important school-home relationship factor is viewed differently by various groups. Teachers and principals believe that item 1 “*Parents are regularly informed about their child’s progress*” is an important factor for SE, with means ranging from $M = 4.91$, $SD = 0.288$ to $M = 4.82$, $SD = 0.447$. The distribution of these groups’ responses indicate that there is a high level of agreement regarding the high importance level of this factor for SE. Frequencies also corroborated with percentages of 51% and 63%, showing that these groups believe this factor to be extremely important. Therefore, teachers and principals are supportive of the active role of parents in their childrens’ learning, but are also in favour of informing parents about their children’s progress regularly and systematically. However, unlike teachers and principals, students’ and parents believe that the act of informing parents regularly about their children’s progress and involving them in the learning process is not that important, with means of ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.170$ and $M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.221$ respectively). Being scattered away from the means, the students’ and parents’ responses indicate some disagreement regarding the importance of regular follow up of students’ progress by their families. (Appendices E1, E2, E3, E4)

On the other hand, students and parents believe that item 3 “*There is an effective parent–school association*” is important for SE, with a highest mean of their responses of ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.099$ and $M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.168$ respectively). Standard deviation values indicate that there is an apparent disagreement because responses are scattered away from the means. Similarly, the frequencies of their responses to this factor supported their perception of this factor as an extremely important one for SE, with percentages of (41%

and 56% respectively). Students and parents might have perceived this factor as important because they wanted schools to involve parents effectively in the education process through well-organised associations (Appendix E3, E4).

There is also a consensus between various groups on the least important factors according to the lowest means of their responses. For example, participants (teachers, principals, students and parents) believe that item 5 “*There is an active and supportive parents’ committee*” is important, with low means of ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 0.843$; $M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.447$, $M = 3.41$, $SD = 1.234$ and $M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.194$ respectively). The distribution of principals’ responses to this factor indicate that there is apparent agreement among this group’s responses, since they are mostly concentrated around the mean, while it is distributed far away from the means of teachers’, students’ and parents responses. This indicates an apparent disagreement between these groups regarding the importance of this factor for SE. Nevertheless, analysis of frequencies for these groups indicates that less than half of participants -(except parents) - believe that this factor is extremely important, with percentages of (49%, 43%, 37% and 54% respectively). This finding indicates that participants are less interested in parents’ involvement in committees related to schooling than in direct engagement in students’ learning. Therefore, stakeholders believe that effective participation of parents in their childrens’ learning might be better addressed by direct involvement in students’ learning than in committees, which might not be practical or available for all parents (Appendices E1, E2, E3, E4).

All groups (teachers, principals, students and parents) also agreed that item 7 “*Parents are proud of the school*” is less important than other factors mentioned above, since they responded to the importance of this item with means of ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 0.380$; $M = 4.65$, $SD = 0.447$, $M = 3.40$, $SD = 1.143$ and $M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.189$ respectively). The distribution of their responses indicated that there is a certain level of agreement and concentration around the means of teachers and principals, but it is apparently scattered in students’ and parents’ responses from the means. Frequencies of participants’ responses indicated that less stakeholders from various groups, except parents, believe that this factor is extremely important for SE, with percentages of (42%, 48%, 29% and 55% respectively). This finding indicated that various groups believe that parents’ positive attitudes toward school play a less important role in SE than their involvement in children’s learning, which might better contribute to SE (Appendices E1, E2, E3, E4).

6.3.4.3. Similarities and Differences

With the use of letters (M) and (L) displayed in table 6.10 below, the three most and least important school-home relationship factors are considered in light of the highest and lowest means of participants' responses (full and sub-samples). The table shows that there is a high level of agreement between all groups regarding items 2 “*Parents are involved in their child’s learning*” and 4 “*Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom*”.

Table 6 10 Most and least important school-home relationship factors as perceived by stakeholders

#	School-Home Relationship Factors	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
1	Parents are regularly informed about their child’s progress	M	M	M	L	L
2	Parents are involved in their child’s learning	M	M	M	M	M
3	There is an effective parent–school association			L	M	M
4	Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom	M	M	M	M	M
5	There is an active and supportive parents’ committee	L	L	L	L	L
6	Parents’ days are well attended	L	L			
7	Parents are proud of the school	L	L	L	L	L

**M: most important*

**L: least important*

Table 6.10 indicates that stakeholders commonly agree that parents should be involved in their childrens’ learning. They might have taken this position due to their feeling that the full participation of family and school could better carry out the school mission and achieve its goals, which will consequently contribute significantly and positively in SE. The full sample also shows agreement between principals and teachers on the importance of informing parents regularly about their children’s progress (item 1).

At a time when students and parents are highly interested in parents’ participation through parents-school associations, because of their desire to take a much more active role in schooling, other groups might believe that such associations are not well*structured and effective, so as to impact on school life efficiently.

6.3.4.4 Summary of School-Home Relationship Factors Findings

The following school-home relationship factors are perceived by the full sample as the most important, with the highest means of their responses:

1. Parents are regularly informed about their child's progress,
2. Parents are involved in their child's learning,
3. Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom.

Whereas the following are perceived as of least importance:

1. There is an active and supportive parents' committee,
2. Parents' days are well attended,
3. Parents are proud of the school.

6.4.5 Local Community Factors

6.4.5.1 Full Sample Responses to Local Community Factors

Table 6.11 below shows the descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to the local community factors in terms of their level of importance. It indicates that all local community factors are very important, with means ranging from 4.00 to 4.15. The analysis of frequencies indicates that an average of (31%) of participants believe that these factors are extremely important for SE and about (37%) believe they are very important.

Table 6 11 Descriptive statistics of participant' responses to local community factors in terms of importance level

#	Local Community Factors	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
1	There is a variety of societies and clubs in the school	136	29%	173	37%	120	26%	11	2%	22	5%	4.02	0.98
2	Staff play an active role in the community	131	28%	181	39%	111	24%	22	5%	17	4%	4.12	0.92
3	Pupils play an active role in the community	154	33%	168	36%	108	23%	21	5%	11	2%	4.13	0.95
4	Members of the community play an active role in the school.	144	31%	175	38%	107	23%	13	3%	23	5%	4.15	0.90

#	Local Community Factors	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
5	There are good links with local industry	141	31%	148	32%	146	32%	18	4%	9	2%	4.07	0.93
6	Supporting social services is a major activity for the school	141	31%	150	32%	105	23%	34	7%	12	3%	4.00	0.99

The highest three means of participants' responses indicate that the most important local community factors as perceived by stakeholders are items 2 "*Staff play an active role in the community*", 3 "*pupils play an active role in the community*" and 4 "*Members of the community play an active role in the school*" with means of ($M= 4.12$, $SD = 0.92$; $M= 4.13$, $SD =0.95$ and $M= 4.15$, $SD =0.90$ respectively). The distribution of stakeholders' responses to these three items indicated that most responses are away from the means, which indicated a proportional disagreement between participants on the importance level of these factors for SE. In fact, stakeholders are in favour of a school-community mutual relationship in order to be effective.

Stakeholders rated items 1 "*There is a variety of societies and clubs in the school*", 5 "*There are good links with local industry*" and 6 "*Supporting social services is a major activity for the school*" less than the previous items that have been discussed above. The rating resulted in low means of ($M= 4.02$, $SD = 0.98$; $M= 4.07$, $SD =0.93$ and $M= 4.00$, $SD = 0.99$ respectively). Standard deviation values for these factors indicate that there is some disagreement between stakeholders regarding the level of importance of these items for SE. This indicates that stakeholders are less interested in social activities and services inside school, and are for more cooperation between the surrounding community and school, to help school produce generations with stronger links and deeper experiences in its community's problems.

6.4.5.2 Sub-Samples' Perceptions

The analysis of sub-samples' responses to local community factors indicated that these factors are perceived differently in terms of their level of importance. For example, as in the full sample, all sub-samples (teachers, principals, students and parents) agreed that item 3 "*Pupils play an active role in the community*" is very important, with means of ($M= 4.17$, $SD = 0.926$; $M= 4.32$, $SD =0.806$, $M= 4.01$, $SD =1.155$ and $M= 4.02$, $SD =0.923$ respectively). The distribution of subsamples' responses to this factor indicated that most

of these responses are slightly scattered away from the means, which indicates slight disagreement inside each group on the importance level of these local community factors for SE. This disagreement might be due to their different understanding of the students' role in the community, or the effectiveness of this role in students' learning (Appendices F1-F4).

Analysis of data also indicated that item 2, "*Staff play an active role in the community*" received is highly rated by three groups (principals, students and parents) with means of ($M= 4.24$, $SD =0.751$, $M= 4.09$, $SD =1.067$ and $M= 4.02$, $SD =1.007$ respectively). Apparently, the distribution of these three groups' responses suggested some disagreement on the importance level of this factor for SE. It might be natural for many stakeholders to expect further active roles of school staff in the community, so as to interact effectively with the community, which would reflect positively on students' learning outcomes and SE. Teachers, being the majority of school staff, appeared less interested in taking further roles in the community, since they responded with the lowest mean to this factor ($M= 4.12$, $SD =0.873$). In spite of that, the distribution of teachers' responses suggested some disagreement about the importance level of this factor for SE.

Teachers and principals are interested in the role the community that could play in school, since they responded to item 4 "*Members of the community play an active role in the school*" with the highest means of ($M= 4.20$, $SD =0.924$ and $M= 4.39$, $SD =0.747$ respectively). Despite some disagreement in these two groups' responses to this factor, according to the standard deviation values, participants appeared to prefer more active roles of community associations to play in school. However, students and parents seemed less interested than teachers and principals in the role of community members inside school, since they responded to this factor with the lowest means of ($M= 4.20$, $SD =0.924$ and $M= 4.39$, $SD =0.747$ respectively).

Analysis of data also indicated that all subsamples perceived item 6 "*Supporting social services is a major activity for the school*" as very important for SE, with lowest mean responses of ($M= 3.94$, $SD = 1.069$; $M= 4.09$, $SD =0.83$, $M= 3.96$, $SD =1.07$ and $M= 4.01$, $SD =0.989$ respectively). Standard deviation values indicate a proportionate level of disagreement between participants of each group regarding the importance level of this factor. Participants appeared to be less interested in social services, possibly because they

believe that these services are of less importance for students and schools in promoting academic achievements.

This might be supported by teachers and principals views' regarding item 5 "*There are good links with local industry*", where they seem to believe that building good relations with community and social institutions might be less important than direct involvement with these institutions in specific activities that might have more influence on school life. However, students and parents appeared to be more interested in these links with local industry, since they responded to this factor with the highest mean response of ($M= 4.00$, $SD =1.064$ and $M= 4.02$, $SD =0.971$ respectively). The responses of these groups indicate that they give more priority to enhancing students' knowledge and skills related to the current industry in their community, which might reflect positively on both school mission and effectiveness.

6.4.5.3 Similarities and Differences

Findings mentioned above indicate that there is some level of agreement between various types of samples regarding certain most and least important local community factors. Table 6.12 below shows the three most and least important local community factors as perceived by the full sample and subsamples. Most and least important factors are considered in light of the highest and lowest means of participants' responses.

Table 6 12 Most and least important local community factors as perceived by stakeholders

#	Local Community Factors	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
1	There is a variety of societies and clubs in the school	L	M	L	L	L
2	Staff play an active role in the community	M	L	M	M	M
3	Pupils play an active role in the community	M	M	M	M	M
4	Members of the community play an active role in the school.	M	M	M	L	L
5	There are good links with local industry	L	L	L	M	M
6	Supporting social services is a major activity for the school	L	L	L	L	L

*M: most important

*L: least important

Table 6.12 above shows that all sample types agreed on the high importance level for pupils to participate effectively in community activities. This means that stakeholders relied heavily on students' participation in community activities to acquire social skills, understand community issues and contribute to the achievement of school goals. Giving students maximum opportunities to play effective roles in community makes it possible for them to share real-life experiences and have the chance to solve community problems.

There is also a high level of agreement between all groups, except teachers, on the high level of importance for school staff to participate effectively in playing their educational role in the surrounding community. Schools, as educational institutes, should engage all its community members in wider social activities outside school, in order to achieve its educational goals and promote its effectiveness. Yet, unlike students and parents, teachers and principals believe that the role the community members could play inside school is highly important. Results also indicate that all groups agreed on the lowest importance level of the social services school might offer as one of its major tasks. This could be understood in a wealthy country where school community rarely participated in social activities related to environment, for instance.

The same can be said about the role of school social clubs, except for teachers who believe it is highly important.

6.4.5.4 Summary of Local Community Factors Findings

The following local community factors are perceived by the full sample as the most important with highest means of participants' responses:

1. Staff play an active role in the community,
2. Pupils play an active role in the community,
3. Members of the community play an active role in the school.

Whereas the following three local community factors are perceived by the full sample as the least important, with the lowest means of responses:

1. There are a variety of societies and clubs in the school,

2. There are good links with local industry,
3. Supporting social services is a major activity for the school.

6.5 Effective School Leadership Qualities

Question 3: What are the most important qualities of effective school leadership as perceived by stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?

This section will display the findings of stakeholders' perceptions about the most and least important effective leadership qualities. As indicated in table 6.13 below, participants (full sample) were required to rate 17 items representing effective characteristics of school leadership according to Likert scale out of five points where (5) refers to extremely important while (1) refers to not important. The sub samples' perceptions will also be displayed to find out the individual groups' specific views regarding the most and least important leadership qualities. A discussion on the similarities and differences across various groups' perceptions regarding these qualities will be presented before summarising the findings of this question. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages) are used to find out the highest and lowest important school leadership qualities as perceived by stakeholders. The highest and lowest important characteristics are identified in light of the highest means, the frequencies of stakeholders' responses and standard deviation.

6.5.1 Full Sample Responses

The highest three means of the full sample's responses are considered indicators of the most important characteristics, while the lowest three means of the full sample's responses are viewed as the least important ones. Table 6.13 below shows the descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to school leadership qualities.

Table 6 13 Descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to school leadership qualities (No. 462)

#	School Leadership Qualities	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
1	The school has a strong, purposeful and involved leader	255	55%	145	31%	43	9%	11	2%	8	2%	4.41	0.94
2	The school leader is very experienced	260	56%	155	34%	31	7%	8	2%	8	2%	4.50	0.86

#	School Leadership Qualities	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
3	The school leader shows he/she has high expectations	237	51%	161	35%	47	10%	7	2%	10	2%	4.39	0.86
4	The school leader is positive and consistent in his/her approach	248	54%	158	34%	42	9%	7	2%	7	2%	4.43	0.78
5	The school leader shows a high level of ethics and morals	285	62%	127	27%	39	8%	5	1%	6	1%	4.55	0.73
6	The school leader is knowledgeable	273	59%	131	28%	41	9%	5	1%	12	3%	4.46	0.80
7	The school leader has good problem-solving skills	251	54%	154	33%	37	8%	8	2%	12	3%	4.46	0.87
8	The school leader is creative and innovative	237	51%	162	35%	40	9%	14	3%	9	2%	4.35	0.86
9	The school leader is physically active	214	46%	166	36%	66	14%	7	2%	9	2%	4.28	0.91
10	The school leader thinks positively	256	55%	148	32%	40	9%	7	2%	11	2%	4.45	0.83
11	The school leader is an effective communicator and motivator	240	52%	161	35%	43	9%	8	2%	10	2%	4.40	0.87
12	The school leader maintains close rapport with teachers	266	58%	140	30%	41	9%	5	1%	10	2%	4.49	0.79
13	The school leader emphasizes high academic achievement	242	52%	164	35%	36	8%	11	2%	9	2%	4.42	0.83
14	The school leader creates a positive climate	250	54%	155	34%	38	8%	9	2%	10	2%	4.46	0.84
15	The school leader fulfills most of the objectives of the school	249	54%	157	34%	41	9%	6	1%	9	2%	4.43	0.83
16	The school leader maintains close supervision over the school	257	56%	143	31%	40	9%	13	3%	9	2%	4.45	0.86
17	The school leader manages the school competently	277	60%	129	28%	40	9%	8	2%	8	2%	4.50	0.85

All school leadership qualities displayed in table 6.13 are viewed by stakeholder as extremely important, with means ranging from 4.28 to 4.55. Nevertheless, the three highest means of participants' responses indicate that the most important school leadership qualities are items 2 "*The school leader is very experienced*", 5 "*The school leader shows a high level of ethics and morals*" and 17 "*The school leader manages the school competently*" with means of ($M = 4.50, SD = 0.86$; $M = 4.55, SD = 0.73$ and $M = 4.50, SD = 0.85$ respectively). These responses, scattered around the means, reveal that stakeholders

are aware of the importance of leadership's experience, ethics and competence in running school effectively.

However, stakeholders believe that items 3 "*The school leader shows he/she has high expectations*", 8 "*The school leader is creative and innovative*" and 9 "*The school leader is physically active*" are less important, with lower means of ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.86$; $M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.86$ and $M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.91$ respectively). This means that stakeholders appear to be less interested in leaderships' physical activities, innovation and creativity, as the current school leadership is mostly traditional.

6.5.2 Sub Samples Perceptions

Teachers, principals, and students believe that item 5 "*The school leader shows a high level of ethics and morals*" is extremely important, with highest means of ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.865$; $M = 4.86$, $SD = 0.351$ and $M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.728$ respectively). Standard deviation values show a level of consistency in stakeholders' responses regarding this important leadership quality. It is believed that, apart from high qualifications or experience, a school leader is regarded as the one who should set a good ethical and moral example for all other education parties.

Teachers also gave high priority to items 6 "*The school leader is knowledgeable*" and 7 "*The school leader has good problem-solving skills*" since they responded to these two qualities with highest means of ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.869$ and $M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.849$ respectively). This reflects teachers' interest in the importance of school leaders to be educationally highly qualified, and to be able to solve daily problems with effective leadership skills. Principals believe "thinking positively" (item 10) and "focusing on students' academic achievement" (item 13) are the most important qualities for school leaders, with highest means of ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.869$ and $M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.849$). Despite some disagreement in principals' responses to these qualities, it is apparent that principals are aware of the importance of promoting students' learning through encouraging positive thinking. (Appendices, G1, G2)

Students and parents appeared more consistent in their responses to the importance level of school leader qualities than teachers and principals, since they agreed on two of the most important qualities. They believe that items 2 "*The school leader is very experienced*" and

17 “*The school leader manages the school competently*” are highly important, with mean responses of (M = 4.47, SD =0.816 and M= 4.44, SD =0.96 respectively) for the first and of (M = 4.43, SD =0.97 and M= 4.50, SD =0.896 respectively) for the second (**Appendices G3,G4**). This indicates that students and parents emphasised the role of leader experience and competence in management.

On the other hand, there is wide agreement between the various groups on the importance level of items with lowest means, such as item 8 “*The school leader is creative and innovative*” which is perceived by principals, students and parents with lowest means of (M = 4.47, SD =0.609 , M = 4.21 , SD =0.944 and M= 4.24, SD =1.002 respectively). Item 9 “*The school leader is physically active*” is also perceived similarly by all groups (teachers, principals, students and parents) with lowest means of (M = 4.32, SD =0.98, M = 4.44, SD =0.773, M = 4.18, SD =0.858 and M= 4.19, SD =1.038 respectively) (Appendices G1-G4) . Despite some slight divergence in some samples’ responses regarding the importance of these qualities according to the standard deviation values, there is also a consensus between groups that school leaders’ creativity and physical activities are less important than experience, knowledge, competence or morals. In fact, stakeholders are more interested in the universal qualities of school leaders than specific ones, such as creativity.

6.5.3 Similarities and Differences

Various groups agreed on the importance level of some school leadership qualities - whether most or least important - with various responses to the other qualities. Table 6.14 below shows the three most and least important qualities of school leadership as perceived by the full sample and subsamples. Most and least important qualities are considered in light of the highest and lowest means of participants’ responses.

Table 6 14 Most and least important school leadership qualities as perceived by stakeholders

#	School Leadership Qualities	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
1	The school has a strong, purposeful and involved leader					L
2	The school leader is very experienced	M			M	M
3	The school leader shows he/she has high expectations	L	L			
4	The school leader is positive and consistent in his/her approach					

#	School Leadership Qualities	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
5	The school leader shows a high level of ethics and morals	M	M	M	M	
6	The school leader is knowledgeable		M			
7	The school leader has good problem-solving skills		M			
8	The school leader is creative and innovative	L		L	L	L
9	The school leader is physically active	L	L	L	L	L
10	The school leader thinks positively			M		
11	The school leader is an effective communicator and motivator		L			
12	The school leader maintains close rapport with teachers					
13	The school leader emphasizes high academic achievement			M		
14	The school leader creates a positive climate					
15	The school leader fulfills most of the objectives of the school				L	M
16	The school leader maintains close supervision over the school					
17	The school leader manages the school competently	M		L	M	M

*M: most important

*L: least important

Table 6.14 above shows that of the full sample teachers, principals and students mainly agreed on the high importance level of school leadership' ethics and morals (item 5). This agreement might be attributed to stakeholders' awareness that a school leader is expected to set an example for all other educational parties. Students' and parents' responses to items 2 and 17 related to the importance of leader's experience and competence, as most important school leadership qualities revealed their understanding of the importance for any effective school leader to acquire these two crucial qualities, without which a school could not be run effectively.

However, as they are interacting with the principals on a daily basis on curriculum management and other schooling issues, teachers emphasised the importance of knowledge and problem solving skills for school leaders. Principals, on the other hand, are the only group that highlighted the importance of positive thinking and its effect on school management and the students' on learning achievements.

Nevertheless, the full sample agreed that school leaders' physical activity is less important than other qualities. Stakeholders believe that school leaders' physical ability could not be

a determinant quality of effective leadership. However, it is believed that the leader who could monitor various schooling activities on the ground would be more successful than one who runs a school from the office. All groups, except teachers, also agreed that school leader innovation and creativity are less important than other qualities. However, creativity is an important quality of school leaders, because it enables them to deal with educational problems and solve as many issues as possible, without referring back to routine channels and readymade one-for-all solutions.

6.5.4 Summary of School Leadership Qualities

In light of the above discussion of the least and most important school leadership qualities, the following school leadership qualities are perceived by the full sample as the most important, with highest means of participants' responses:

1. The school leader is very experienced,
2. The school leader shows a high level of ethics and morals,
3. The school leader manages the school competently.

The following school leadership qualities are perceived by the full sample as the least important with the lowest means of responses:

1. The school leader shows he/she has high expectations,
2. The school leader is creative and innovative,
3. The school leader is physically active.

6.6 Strategies for Improving School Effectiveness

Question 4: What are the most important strategies that contribute to improving schools as perceived by stakeholders (principals, teachers, parents and pupils) in the UAE?

This section aims scrutinise stakeholders' perceptions about the most and least important strategies that could contribute to improving SE. As indicated in table 6.15 below, participants (full sample) are required to rate (18) items on strategies for improving SE according to the Likert scale. The sub samples' perceptions will also be broken down to

find the individual groups' specific views regarding the most and least important strategies. Then, a discussion of the similarities and differences across various groups' perceptions regarding these strategies will be presented, before summarising the findings. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages) are used to find the most and least important strategies. In order to shed light on the spread of stakeholders' responses to all factors, standard deviation for related responses is discussed.

6.6.1 Full Sample Responses

In order to identify the most and least important strategies for improving SE, an analysis of mean responses of participants was conducted. The highest three means of the full sample's responses are considered indicators of the most important strategies for improving SE, while the lowest three means of the full sample's responses are viewed as the least important strategies. Table 6.15 shows the descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to strategies for improving SE in terms of importance. It indicates that all strategies for improving SE are viewed by stakeholder as extremely important, with means ranging from 4.25 to 4.55 in addition to an extra item rated as very important ($M=4.07$).

Table 6 15 Descriptive statistics of the full sample's responses to improving SE strategies (No. 462)

#	Strategies For Improving SE	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
1	School leaders should undertake leadership education programme and be provided with leadership experiences prior to becoming a school principal	243	53%	133	29%	66	14%	7	2%	13	3%	4.25	1.00
2	The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff	275	60%	131	28%	35	8%	9	2%	12	3%	4.48	0.90
3	The school should integrate Islamic and local cultural values as well as using modern, western educational methods	276	60%	118	26%	47	10%	10	2%	11	2%	4.43	0.98
4	The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria	243	53%	154	33%	47	10%	9	2%	9	2%	4.34	0.98
5	The Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) should cooperate with schools to ensure the recruitment of committed, high quality staff	255	55%	143	31%	42	9%	11	2%	11	2%	4.38	1.02

#	Strategies For Improving SE	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
6	The school leadership should take responsibility for developing strategies for improvement, based on a realistic assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses	269	58%	132	29%	44	10%	7	2%	10	2%	4.45	0.91
7	The school leadership should establish strategies for effective communication with all members of the school	268	58%	140	30%	39	8%	7	2%	8	2%	4.45	0.90
8	The school leadership should take responsibility for change management and establish processes and practices to ensure this is effective	242	52%	159	34%	45	10%	10	2%	6	1%	4.39	0.87
9	National curriculum requirements should guide the school curriculum and	254	55%	148	32%	42	9%	9	2%	9	2%	4.38	0.94
10	The school should establish strategies that will enable consistent and focused professional staff development	238	52%	160	35%	42	9%	15	3%	7	2%	4.36	0.91
11	The school should have high expectations for the success of every student and establish teaching strategies that take into account diverse abilities	276	60%	130	28%	42	9%	8	2%	6	1%	4.47	0.87
12	Teaching and learning should be strongly aligned with the assessment process, with assessment being used for a wide range of student	275	60%	124	27%	44	10%	14	3%	5	1%	4.42	0.90
13	The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional	293	63%	114	25%	38	8%	6	1%	11	2%	4.51	0.87
14	Where possible, the school should encourage teachers, parents and students to be involved in decision making about aspects of school	286	62%	121	26%	41	9%	5	1%	9	2%	4.45	0.90
15	The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teachers	296	64%	107	23%	37	8%	10	2%	12	3%	4.55	0.89
16	School leaders should see themselves as learners as well as leaders	275	60%	122	26%	50	11%	8	2%	7	2%	4.47	0.93
17	It is important to have an independent government body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools	226	49%	129	28%	68	15%	21	5%	18	4%	4.07	1.17
18	The school should establish, develop and promote partnerships with parents, community agencies and others that might support the development of the school	257	56%	134	29%	48	10%	10	2%	13	3%	4.38	0.92

The highest three means of participants' responses indicate that the most important strategies for improving SE are items 2 "*The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff*", 13 "*The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional learning community*" and 15 "*The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teachers*" with means of ($M= 4.48, SD = 0.90$; $M= 4.51, SD =0.87$ and $M= 4.55, SD =0.89$ respectively). The distribution of stakeholders' responses to these three strategies indicates that most responses are slightly scattered around the means of these responses, which reflected some disagreement between the participants regarding the importance of these strategies for improving SE. However, these responses revealed that stakeholders strongly believe that in order to improve school effectiveness, a clear and ambitious vision should be jointly set out by the school leader and staff. It should be apparent that stakeholders emphasised the need for schools to have clear plans for the future, by which high quality performance of staff and students could be achieved successfully. Stakeholders also looked very interested in improving school effectiveness through collaborative work between the school community led by school leaders. In fact, without collaboration amongst the school community led by an effective leadership, SE could hardly be improved. Stakeholders also reported that SE improvement may not be effectively achieved without providing the school community with an appropriate, safe and supportive atmosphere.

However, stakeholders believe that items 1 "*School leaders should undertake leadership education programme and be provided with leadership experiences prior to becoming a school principal*", 4 "*The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria*" and 17 "*It is important to have an independent government body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools*" are extremely important with means of ($M= 4.25, SD = 1.00$; $M= 4.34, SD =0.98$ and $M= 4.07, SD = 1.17$ respectively). Though standard deviation values of stakeholders' responses indicate that there is an apparent disagreement between stakeholders regarding the level of importance of these strategies, their views reflect high-level awareness regarding the necessity of government supervision over schools for accountability reasons.

6.6.2 Sub Samples Perceptions

As can be seen in the appendices (H1-H4), there is an apparent divergence on the level of the groups' responses regarding strategies for school improvement. All groups (teachers,

principals, students and parents) believe that item 15 *“The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teachers”* is extremely important, with the highest mean of (M= 4.66, SD = 0.836; M= 4.62, SD = 0.953; M= 4.42, SD =0.887 and M= 4.49, SD =0.875 respectively). A possible explanation might be that learning outcomes would be better in the case that students and staff are provided with a healthy school climate of equity, serenity and conviviality.

As with the full sample, teachers and principals agree that item 2 *“The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff”* is highly important, with mean responses of (M= 4.42, SD =0.887 and M= 4.49, SD =0.875 respectively). Teachers also agreed with the full sample that item 13 *“The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional learning community”* should be a high priority for schools to improve their effectiveness, since they responded to this item with means of (M= 4.42, SD =0.887 and M= 4.49, SD =0.875 respectively). This indicates that teachers shared their perceptions with principals regarding the importance level of a clear vision and future planning for schools to improve significantly, and with students regarding the importance of a collaborative atmosphere.

Item 6 *“The school leadership should take responsibility for developing strategies for improvement, based on a realistic assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses”* is considered by principals as most important for improving school effectiveness, with a high mean of (M=4.58, SD= .967). Item 11 *“The school should have high expectations for the success of every student and establish teaching strategies that take into account diverse abilities within the student body”* is also considered by students as most important for improving school effectiveness, with the highest mean of (M=4.48, SD= .858). As for the parents, items 7 *“The school leadership should establish strategies for effective communication with all members of the school community”* and 16 *“School leaders should see themselves as learners as well as leaders”* are viewed as most important, with highest mean responses of (M= 4.45, SD =0.841 and M= 4.43, SD =0.798 respectively). This indicates that various groups' responses are not consistent about the most important strategies for improving SE. However, the high mean of their responses revealed some important facts: first, principals are aware of and admitted that it would be their main responsibility to improve SE, provided that realistic measures are taken to overcome the schools' weaknesses, such as professional and realistic assessment of schools' capabilities and the leadership level of authority. Second, students gave high priority to teaching

strategies to meet their interests, needs and abilities, in order to improve school effectively. Third, parents are interested in the role of school leaders. Who should establish positive and successful communication channels with staff and other educational parties, and who have to update their knowledge and skills about the world.

On the other hand, three strategies for improving SE are considered the least important by the full sample. Principals and students viewed item 1 “*School leaders should undertake leadership education programme and be provided with leadership experiences prior to becoming a school principal*” as the least important, with means of ($M= 4.30$, $SD =1.024$ and $M= 3.92$ $SD =1.189$ respectively) (see Appendix H2&H3). Teachers and principals considered item 4 “*The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria* “ as less important than other strategies, with means of ($M= 4.36$, $SD =0.989$ and $M= 4.27$, $SD =1.146$ respectively) whereas item 17 “*It is important to have an independent government body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools*” is believed to be of less importance for SE by teachers, principals and parents, with means of ($M= 3.97$, $SD =1.312$, $M= 3.86$, $SD =1.309$ and $M= 4.17$, $SD =1.053$ respectively).

Despite the apparent disagreement in individual groups’ responses about the importance of some strategies for SE, according to the standard deviation values of these responses, this finding suggested that some groups perceived these strategies as less important for SE than others mentioned above. For example, principals and students believe that the continuing professional development of school leaders might not be very influential on SE.

Disagreement appeared in individual groups’ responses regarding the importance level of each strategy for improving SE due to different backgrounds, experiences and awareness of these different groups. The teachers’ responses might have reflected their interests and concerns related to improving schools, which might be different from students or parents, for instance. The teachers believe that partnerships with parents or other community agencies can be less effective than improving school from within. The students’ view was that Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) might be less effective in recruiting school staff and that schools might better decide their own curriculum. The parents’ responses reflected the priority to give further roles for schools to change internally. They believe that it is the school leader’s responsibility to establish school effectiveness and change

through effective practices. However, parents insist on the need of professional development for school leadership.

6.6.3 Similarities and Differences

It is apparent from the findings mentioned above that various groups agreed on the importance level of some strategies for improving SE. There is also some divergence between groups' responses to other strategies. Table 6.16 below shows the three most and least important strategies for improving SE, as perceived by the full sample and subsamples. The most and least important strategies are considered in light of the highest and lowest means of participants' responses.

Table 6 16 Most and least important strategies for improving SE as perceived by stakeholders

#	Strategies For Improving SE	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
1	School leaders should undertake leadership education programmes and be provided with leadership experiences prior to becoming a school	L		L	L	
2	The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff	M	M	M		
3	The school should integrate Islamic and local cultural values as well as using modern, western educational methods					
4	The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria	L	L	L		
5	The Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) should cooperate with schools to ensure the recruitment of committed, high quality staff				L	
6	The school leadership should take responsibility for developing strategies for improvement, based on a realistic assessment of the school's strengths and			M		
7	The school leadership should establish strategies for effective communication with all members of the school community					M
8	The school leadership should take responsibility for change management and establish processes and practices to ensure this is effective					L
9	National curriculum requirements should guide the school curriculum and activities within the classroom				L	
10	The school should establish strategies that will enable consistent and focused professional staff development					L
11	The school should have high expectations for the success of every student, and establish teaching strategies that take into account diverse abilities				M	
12	Teaching and learning should be strongly aligned with the assessment process, with assessment being used for a wide range of student achievement					

#	Strategies For Improving SE	Full Sample (No. 462)	Teachers (No. 136)	Principals (No. 46)	Students (No. 142)	Parents (No. 138)
13	The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional learning community	M	M		M	
14	Where possible, the school should encourage teachers, parents and students to be involved in decision making about aspects of school					
15	The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teachers	M	M	M	M	M
16	School leaders should see themselves as learners as well as leaders					M
17	It is important to have an independent government body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools	L	L	L		L
18	The school should establish, develop and promote partnerships with parents, community agencies and others that might support the development of the		L			

*M: most important

*L: least important

As for the most important strategies for improving schools, it was found that the full sample agreed with all groups, that providing a safe and supportive learning environment (item 15) could be the best method for improving SE. This consensus between all groups could be because they all believe that improving SE could not be achieved in the absence of a healthy school climate, which would be likely to impact on students' academic outcomes.

The full sample also agreed with teachers and principals on the high importance of school vision, that should be clearly established by a school leader (item 2). This agreement reflects participants' awareness that SE might not be successfully improved without setting out clear plans for the future by which strategic goals could be established. Participants also agreed on the importance for school leadership to establish effective teamwork at school, to manage a high professional learning community (item 13). Therefore, participants related the importance of setting a school vision, along with setting out team work at school, in order to collaboratively achieve school goals.

The other most important strategies for improving SE are perceived in various ways by the groups. For example, principals believe that it is their responsibility to set up plans for school improvement based on measurement of school strengths and weaknesses (item 6) against national standards, which take into account the nature of a school and conditions which might be different for other schools. Students believe that schools with higher

learning expectations and with teaching strategies that take into account their individual needs and interests would be more successful in improving their effectiveness (item 11). Generally, students are more concerned with their instructional needs as an appropriate way for improving SE. Parents are relying heavily on school leaders to improve SE. As they are responsible for establishing effective communication at school and developing themselves professionally (items 7 and 16).

As for the least important strategies for improving SE, there were some agreements between various groups. Three strategies are considered the least important by the full sample. Principals and students believe that the professional development of the school leader (item 1) is less important for improving SE than others mentioned above. Therefore, pre-service and in-service professional development of school leaders is viewed as a less important strategy by principals and students for improving SE. The full sample also agreed with teachers and principals regarding the importance level of schools to be involved in identifying success criteria as a strategy to improve SE (item 4), and the importance level of an independent government body to gauge and inspect the quality of education in schools (item 17).

6.6.4 Summary of Strategies for Improving School Effectiveness

The following strategies are perceived by the full sample as the most important for SE, with the highest means of participants' responses:

1. The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff ,
2. The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional learning community,
3. The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teachers.

Whereas the following strategies are perceived by the full sample as the least important for improving SE with the lowest means of responses:

1. School leaders should undertake leadership education programme and be provided with leadership experiences prior to becoming a school principal,

2. The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria ,
3. It is important to have an independent government body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools.

6.7 Ways for Improving School Leadership

Question 5: What are the most important ways that contribute to developing school leaders as perceived by teachers and principals in the UAE?

As indicated in table 6.17 below, 46 principals and 136 teachers were required to rate 14 items on ways that could contribute to improving school leaders, according to the Likert scale. The findings within this section stem from the principals' and teachers' perceptions regarding the most and least important ways for improving school leadership.

6.7.1 Principals' and Teachers' Perceptions

The three highest means of the principals' responses are considered indicators of the most important ways for improving school leaders, while the three lowest are viewed as the least important. Table 6.17 shows the descriptive statistics of principals' responses to this part of the research, whereas table 6.18 shows the descriptive statistics of teachers.

Table 6 17 Descriptive statistics of the principals' responses to ways for improving school leadership (No. 46)

#	Ways For Improving School leadership	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
1	Undertaking a Master's degree in educational leadership	11	24%	24	52%	4	9%	5	11%	2	4%	3.74	1.201
2	Attending a training course on school leadership that is more than 6 months long	11	24%	20	43%	9	20%	3	7%	3	7%	3.8	1.067
3	Attending regular professional development activities on leadership issues	12	26%	22	48%	4	9%	7	15%	1	2%	3.8	1.067
4	Attending information sessions held by the Ministry of Education	12	26%	20	43%	7	15%	5	11%	2	4%	3.76	1.099
5	Attending regular discussions with other school leaders on leadership issues	12	26%	23	50%	5	11%	3	7%	3	7%	4.27	1.102

#	Ways For Improving School leadership	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
6	Being coached by an experienced principal	6	13%	20	43%	12	26%	4	9%	4	9%	3.75	1.109
7	Being mentored by an experienced principal	10	22%	27	59%	1	2%	3	7%	5	11%	3.72	1.109
8	Working with teachers on issues of school improvement	19	41%	19	41%	6	13%	1	2%	1	2%	4.26	0.713
9	Using online resources from other countries	17	37%	20	43%	8	17%	0	0%	1	2%	4.13	0.859
10	Developing and aligning research-based practices	16	35%	24	52%	2	4%	2	4%	2	4%	4.09	0.985
11	Implementing high educational performance standards (continuation of International Partnership)	15	33%	21	46%	6	13%	1	2%	3	7%	3.96	1.074
12	Developing skills with regard to managing curriculum and knowledge	15	33%	19	41%	7	15%	2	4%	3	7%	3.89	1.12
13	School principal being subject to an evaluation of performance which would determine the possibility of continuation of his/her work .of remaining in post..	14	30%	18	39%	10	22%	2	4%	2	4%	3.87	1.046
14	Attending sessions in relation to ADEC's policy and regulations	19	41%	20	43%	7	15%	0	0%	0	0%	4.17	0.902

Table 6 18 Descriptive statistics of the teachers' responses to ways for improving school leadership (No. 136)

#	Ways For Improving School leadership	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
1	Undertaking a Master's degree in educational leadership	24	18	51	38%	39	29%	10	7%	12	9%	3.48	1.152
2	Attending a training course on school leadership that is more than 6 months long	32	24	60	44%	29	21%	7	5%	8	6%	3.83	1.04
3	Attending regular professional development activities on leadership	32	24	78	57%	10	7%	10	7%	6	4%	3.95	0.981
4	Attending information sessions held by the Ministry of Education	39	29	72	53%	15	11%	4	3%	6	4%	4.11	0.922
5	Attending regular discussions with other school leaders on leadership	57	42	59	43%	10	7%	3	2%	7	5%	4.18	0.953

#	Ways For Improving School leadership	EI		VI		MI		LI		NI		M	SD
		Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.	Fq.	%	Fq.	%	Fq.		
6	Being coached by an experienced principal	36	26	53	39%	30	22%	10	7%	7	5%	3.72	1.081
7	Being mentored by an experienced principal	30	22	69	51%	26	19%	3	2%	8	6%	3.65	1.198
8	Working with teachers on issues of school	51	38	64	47%	12	9%	2	1%	7	5%	4.18	1.022
9	Using online resources from other countries	35	26	56	41%	21	15%	15	11%	9	7%	3.85	0.999
10	Developing and aligning research-based practices	35	26	72	53%	18	13%	5	4%	6	4%	3.87	1.012
11	Implementing high educational performance standards (continuation of International Partnership)	46	34	65	48%	12	9%	6	4%	7	5%	3.95	1.052
12	Developing skills with regard to managing curriculum and knowledge	34	25	74	54%	16	12%	4	3%	8	6%	3.87	1.052
13	School principal being subject to an evaluation of performance which would	34	25	68	50%	16	12%	7	5%	11	8%	4.01	1.017
14	Attending sessions in relation to ADEC's policy	44	32	69	51%	13	10%	4	3%	6	4%	3.76	1.193

Table 6.17 indicated that principals viewed all ways for improving school leadership as very important, with means ranging from 3.72 to 4.17. Only two ways (items 1 and 5) are perceived as extremely important, with means of ($M= 4.27$ and $M= 4.26$ respectively). In table 6.18, teachers' viewed all ways as very important, with means ranging from 3.48 to 4.18.

Tables 6.17 and 6.18 above show that two items are perceived by both principals and teachers as the most important ways for improving leadership: the first is item 5 "*Attending regular discussions with other school leaders on leadership issues*", and the second is item 8 "*Working with teachers on issues of school improvement*" which are perceived by principals as extremely important with means of ($M= 4.27$, $SD =1.0102$ and $M= 4.26$, $SD =0.317$ respectively), and by teachers as very important, with means of ($M= 4.18$, $SD =0.953$ and $M= 4.18$, $SD = 1.022$ respectively).

The values of standard deviation for each sample's responses indicated that principals agreed to a great extent on the importance of 'working with teachers' to improve leadership, but they disagreed about the importance of 'attending regular discussions on

leadership. Principals, in this sense, appeared to have some objections regarding working with other leaders.

Standard deviation values show that teachers are less confident than principals regarding the most important ways for improving leaders. In fact, teachers' have different experiences and understanding of leadership issues. However, both principals and teachers seem to be in favour of working with other leaders and school teachers to improve school leader performance.

Principals also believe that one of the most important ways to develop school leaders is "*attending sessions in relation to ADEC's policy and regulations*" (item 14) which is perceived as very important, with a mean of ($M= 4.18$, $SD = 1.022$). The high mean of their responses suggested that principals really need to be updated on the educational policy from the Abu Dhabi Education Council, which is responsible for school effectiveness in the UAE. Teachers believe that "*attending information sessions held by the Ministry of Education*" (item 4) could be one of the most important ways to develop school leaders, with a mean of ($M= 4.11$, $SD = 0.922$). Therefore, teachers' perceptions regarding the third most important way for improving school leaders are not too different from the principals', since both called on school leader to attend sessions on information related to their work, which would definitely help them improve.

As for the least important ways for improving school leadership, the principals and teachers shared the same views regarding items 1 "*Undertaking a Master's degree in educational leadership*", 6 "*Being coached by an experienced principal*" and 7 "*Being mentored by an experienced principal*", with means of ($M= 3.74$, $SD =1.201$, $M= 3.75$, $SD =1.109$ and $M= 3.72$, $SD =1.109$ respectively) for principals and with means of ($M= 3.48$, $SD =1.152$; $M= 3.72$, $SD =1.081$ and $M= 3.65$, $SD =1.198$ respectively) for teachers. The standard deviation values and the means of their responses indicate that both groups viewed high qualification as unnecessary for improving school leaders' performance. Cumulated experience, working closely with school staff and sharing school management responsibilities could be more effective strategies to improve school leaders than obtaining a Master's degree in education management.

Principals and teachers also agreed that improving school leaders through being trained or mentored could be less effective and important than the other aforementioned ways.

Principals and teachers appear to be reticent towards mentoring or coaching. This could be attributed to their shared belief that a school leader should do his/her duties with no need of other leaders' assistance, training, coaching or mentoring.

6.7.2 Similarities and Differences

Table 6.19 below shows that principals' and teachers' perceptions are mostly identical regarding the highest or lowest importance level of school leadership qualities. Teachers' responses are found to resemble the principals'.

Table 6 19 Most and least important strategies for ways of improving school leadership as perceived by principals and teachers

#	Ways for Improving School Leadership	Teachers (No= 136)	Principals (No= 46)
1	Undertaking a Master's degree in educational leadership	L	L
2	Attending a training course on school leadership that is more than 6 months long		
3	Attending regular professional development activities on leadership issues		
4	Attending information sessions held by the Ministry of Education	M	
5	Attending regular discussions with other school leaders on leadership issues	M	M
6	Being coached by an experienced principal	L	L
7	Being mentored by an experienced principal	L	L
8	Working with teachers on issues of school improvement	M	M
9	Using online resources from other countries		
10	Developing and aligning research-based practices		
11	Implementing high educational performance standards (continuation of International Partnership)		
12	Developing skills with regard to managing curriculum and knowledge		
13	School principal being subject to an evaluation of performance which would determine the possibility of continuation of his/her work .of remaining in post.		
14	Attending sessions in relation to ADEC's policy and regulations		M

**M: most important*

**L: least important*

The findings above indicate that both principals and teachers perceived ways such as 'exchanging knowledge with other school leaders' and 'working with teachers' as best for improving leadership skills, and knowledge about managing school. Principals' and teachers' resistance to working with other leaders might be due to the different educational and training needs of principals. Instead, principals believe that they could update their information and knowledge through ADEC, while teachers believe that this could be done

through the Ministry Of Education. Therefore, the difference between these two samples regarding this highly important way for improving school leaders is related to the source from which school leaders could update their information; this is the reason why ADEC and the Ministry of Education are supposed to be working collaboratively rather than competitively in this regard. Any mismatch between the two sources could create double standard routes in management and, consequently, would negatively affect school leadership improvement and performance.

However, principals and teachers agreed on the least important ways for improving school leaders. Both samples perceived ways such as getting a high degree in education management or being coached or mentored by other experienced leaders are less effective ways in improving a school leader.

6.7.3 Summary of Ways for Improving School Leadership

The least and most important ways for improving school leadership as perceived by principals and teachers are identified according to their highest/lowest mean responses. Therefore, the three following ways are perceived as the most important for improving school leadership:

1. Attending regular discussions with other school leaders on leadership issues
2. Working with teachers on issues of school improvement
3. Attending sessions in relation to ADEC's policy and regulations.

The following ways are perceived as the least important ones for improving school leadership:

1. Undertaking a Master's degree in educational leadership
2. Being coached by an experienced principal
3. Being mentored by an experienced principal.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter addressed stakeholders' perceptions regarding various issues of school effectiveness, including their understanding of the nature of school effectiveness. It was found that stakeholders believe that effective schools could be best defined as those which

support Islamic instructions, social values and preparation for future employment, with a focus on student outcomes. However, participants appeared to give religious and civic issues prime importance to define school effectiveness, in spite of the fact that they believe all of these definitions are complementary rather than isolated.

The most and least important effective school factors were also addressed from the perspectives of stakeholders using five types: school factors, teaching and learning factors, student factors, school-home relationship factors and local community factors. It was found that effective schools should have a clear plan for development, conformity to the UAE's culture and good relationship the within school community, while factors such as excellence, extra-curricular activities and progress evaluation were found to be less important for effective schools. For the second type, it was found that emphasising local culture, committed staff and an appropriate environment are most important teaching and learning factors, while monitoring learning, providing a variety of learning activities or extracurricular ones are found to be of less importance. For the third type, promoting positive student behavior, encouraging students to work hard and providing students with equal learning opportunities are the most important, while enhancing students' motivation and creativity and providing them with counseling services are less important for stakeholders. As for the fourth type, it was found that involving parents in their children's learning and informing them about their progress are most important, while attending parents' days, joining parents' committees or being proud of schools were found to be less important. Finally, the most important local community factors were believed to revolve around the mutual roles of school staff, students and community which each party could use to develop each other, while the least important factors are the availability of social clubs and activities inside school, maintaining good links with the outer community and supporting social services.

Furthermore, it was found that school leaders' experiences, ethics and management competencies are the most important prerequisites of effective school leadership, while leaders' expectations, innovation and physical activity were found to be the least important. The most and least important strategies that could improve school effectiveness and ways that could help school leaders improve were also addressed. It was found that a clear school vision, active professional teamwork and a supportive learning environment are the most important strategies to improve school effectiveness, while providing school leaders with pre-service training and knowledge, quality standards or criteria to measure

progress, and external or governmental inspections were found to be the least important strategies to improve school effectiveness.

For improving school leadership, it was found that the most important ways are attending discussions with other school leaders on leadership issues, working with teachers on issues of school improvement and attending sessions in relation to ADEC's policy and regulations, while the least important ways are undertaking a Master's degree in educational leadership and being coached or mentored by an experienced principal.

The next chapter will focus on a detailed analysis of the one-to-one interviews conducted with some school principals. The purpose is to cross-validate the two research instruments used to collect the data about the current state of school effectiveness and school leadership in the UAE, and possible strategies for improving these schools and revamping the education system where possible.

CHAPTER SEVEN: INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to: 1) analyse the results of the one-to-one interviews conducted with ten school principals with reference to the components of the questionnaire. 2) explore in depth the key areas reflected in the questionnaire, and where school principals have an important role in leading improvement, and 3) to build a holistic picture by exploring some of the similarities or differences between different datasets, in that ‘interview questions often help the researcher to probe more deeply the phenomena being studied’ (Lodico et al, 2010: 39). The researcher will also provide extracts from the translated transcriptions of some interviews. These extracts will illustrate key ideas and issues emerging from the data, and will be considered in greater depth in Chapter 8.

The second phase of this study aims to examine the perceptions of some experienced secondary school principals regarding the major component of this research - effective school definitions and factors influencing school improvement, effective leadership, and change management within the UAE’s school system. Ten male and female secondary school principals with considerable experience in education management were interviewed individually. All interviews were conducted face to face in an appropriate place, where notes on their responses were taken and exchanges mostly recorded for transcription and analysis later. Each interview took between 45 to 60 minutes. For detailed information in terms of discussing the process of interpretive interviews’ analysis, see chapter five (Methodology).

In order to better understand stakeholders’ perceptions regarding the components of this research, well-qualified and experienced principals were interviewed. It was hoped that these principals would provide this study with their perceptions regarding the best means and strategies to be implemented in the future, for the purpose of improving schools and leadership, as well as the obstacles that might hinder the improvement and change process in the context of the UAE. The interviews were semi-structured with a core set of issues / questions centred on the following themes:

1. Effective school definitions

2. Effective school characteristics:
 - a. School factors.
 - b. Teaching and learning factors.
 - c. Student factors.
 - d. School-home relationship factors.
 - e. Local community factors.
3. Effective school leadership qualities
4. Change management:
 - a. Improving school effectiveness
 - b. Developing school leadership

The main aim of this chapter is to present the analysis of the qualitative data generated from the interviews. The following diagram, which was modified by the researcher in light of previous related literature, summarises the method followed in analysing the qualitative data (Ary et al., 2006, p. 481):

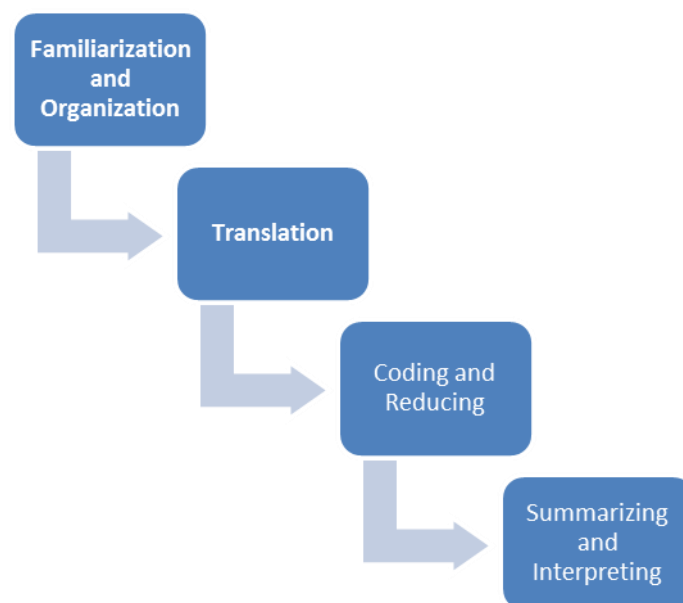


Figure 7 1 Analyzing Qualitative Data process

7.2. Analysis Stages

Ary et al (2006:481) stated that “In different texts, the approaches to analysis of qualitative data vary slightly, but we believe they can be described in three stages[...] (1)

organizing and familiarizing, (2) coding and reducing, and (3) interpreting and representing”. The researcher added ‘translation’ as one more step. These stages could be described briefly as follows:

1. **Familiarisation and Organisation:** the researcher carefully read and reread notes until she became familiar with the data. Then, the notes were put in organised tables according to the interview questions and sub-questions (study components).
2. **Translation:** all notes and quotations were translated from Arabic into English, not ‘word for word’ translation, but essentially to convey ‘the sense’ of the notes and quotations as appropriately as possible.
3. **Coding and Reducing:** the main concepts, categories and themes were identified from the raw data, then reduced into main categories and broad themes that will be scrutinised and discussed later in the final chapter on findings.
4. **Summarising and Interpreting Data:** collected data was organised so that they could be easily understood and interpreted.

7.3. The Interview

The main interview questions were distributed to the five parts of the study as follows:

1. Do you agree with the results of the questionnaire regarding the definitions of SE and their descending order in terms of priority? Why? Why not?
2. Do you agree with the results of the questionnaire regarding the most and least important factors of effective schools? Why? Why not?
3. Do you agree with the results of the questionnaire regarding the most and least important school leadership qualities? Why? Why not?
4. Do you agree with the results of the questionnaire regarding the most and least important strategies for improving schools?
5. Do you agree with the results of the questionnaire regarding the most and least important ways for developing school leadership?

The interviews started by showing the selected sample of the principals the results of the questionnaire in summary form, and giving them some time to consider findings for each part, before addressing relevant questions in terms of agreement or disagreement with these outcomes, and for what reason (see Interview Questions for School Principals - Appendix 3a).

In light of the interview analysis, the participants' views could be displayed as follows:

7.3.1. Interviewees' Perceptions of School Effectiveness Definitions

Results of the questionnaire indicated that stakeholders either strongly agreed or agreed that the following definitions of SE were all important, and that their level of importance appeared in descending order as follows:

1. An effective school supports the development of an understanding of Islamic principles.
2. An effective school supports the development of good citizens.
3. An effective school focuses mostly on academic success.
4. An effective school ensures that graduates have the skills needed to find employment.

In the interview, principals were asked to define the term "effective school" and to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with the importance of these definitions, whether they agreed with this descending order of importance and what the reasons beyond their individual responses were. Table 7.1 below shows a brief description of the interview analysis for the first part.

Table 7 1 Interviewees' responses and justifications of the definitions of SE

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
Agree with the importance of SE definitions list	10	100	<i>They are all important for ES and cannot be discrete as they all complement each other</i>
Disagree with the importance of SE definitions list	0	0	---
Agree with the priority order of SE definitions	2	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Academic success can never be a measure for SE because of natural individual</i>

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
			<i>differences between students</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Promoting Islamic principles and good citizenship in the school community will lead to equality in learning, and the achievement of academic success and preparation for future</i> • <i>National culture and social norms ensure the responsibility of school communities to achieve the learning outcomes</i> • <i>Being motivated by social and religious goals is more effective to achieve learning outcomes than being motivated by individual goals</i>
Disagree with the priority order of SE definitions list	8	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parents and community emphasise the role of schools to focus on students' academic success and preparation for future employment</i> • <i>Islam instructions and citizenship are not the major task of schools</i> • <i>People are of different opinions regarding their cultural and religious background in the UAE's schools</i> • <i>Islamic principles and good citizenship are the family's, mosque's and media roles</i> • <i>Curricula specify around 20% of the learning time on Islamic principles or social values</i> • <i>Students' academic success and preparation for future meet the requirement of the age in the 21st century</i>
Suggestions and further comments	7	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Combining the definitions into one to include all, such as:</i> • <i>"An effective school is that which supports the academic success of students, prepares them for future employment, promotes their Islamic culture and prepares them to be good citizens"</i>

The interview analysis showed that all interviewees agreed that all the definitions were important and appropriate to define SE. They proposed to combine them all into one definition such as: "An effective school is that which supports the academic success of students, prepares them for future employment, promotes their Islamic culture and prepares them to be good citizens". They commented;

"All of these definitions should be included within one statement to define effective schools" (Principal 1)

“Effective schools should integrate these four different aspects ... into one definition” (Principal 2)

“An effective school should focus on students’ academic success and learning without ignoring the importance of promoting their Islamic understanding” (Principal 2)

However, 80% of the interviewees disagreed that the descending order of the definitions mentioned above was appropriate, while some participants had a different opinion. For example, they strongly believed that the priority should be a focus on supporting students to achieve academic success, and to be prepared for future employment. Some of the interviewees believed that the order of the list resulting from the questionnaire was not reflective of SE and its major tasks. They justified their responses differently. For example, some principals believed that the major role of any effective school was to support student academic success and to provide them with necessary skills for future life. They commented;

“An effective school in the UAE context must focus on student academic success because this is its major task. ...parents believe that the only systematic way to carry out their children’s academic success is through schools.” (Principal 1)

“The priority should be for students’ learning and the achievement of school; goals which revolve around preparing students for future employment and successful practice of life activities” (Principal 3)

“If we will give priority to this order of schools definitions, then class time should be rescheduled to specify less than 40% of school time for academic success of students which may not help schools to be effective in the age of communications revolution in the 21st century” (Principal 5)

80 % of interviewees criticized the result of the questionnaire which prioritised supporting student understanding of Islamic principles and their development to be good citizens. For example they believed that in spite of the importance of these tasks for any effective school, they could be implemented more effectively by other social parties such as the

family, religious worship activities, and child-care institutions. They also claimed that emphasising Islamic instruction and good citizenship required certain qualified staff in these fields which might not be available for all schools. Others indicated that the social and cultural/religious roles of schools were confusing, and had a negative impact on its major task of providing students with necessary skills for life. Some of their comments included;

“Teaching students social values or promoting their understanding of Islamic principles can be carried out by many other parties and social institutions, such as the family and media. Therefore I disagree with this order in terms of giving priority to this aspect. The same can be said about supporting students’ development to be good citizens. In fact this would require a certain unified body of staff and clear social curricula which are not available for any school.” (Principal 1)

“People may not agree on certain social values and Islamic instruction, especially in the UAE, where there are a wide variety of cultures” (Principal 2)

“Developing students’ understanding of Islamic or religious values and national identity can be one of a school’s tasks but not a priority, because it is one of the family roles. School might slightly interfere in developing this understanding, and because there are many other parties that could contribute to this issue, including media and students’ mixture with many cultures in the UAE” (Principal 3)

Another interviewee believed that religious and social values should be the role of other institutions. He said;

“I am not worried about students’ social values or their understanding of Islam or even being good citizens in future, because the society is intensively working on this issue through the family, mosque, media and even social clubs, etc” (Principal 10)

Another interviewee claimed that people are motivated by their emotions when it comes to religious, social and cultural values related to Islam, and that is why many people preferred to send their children to schools which might focus on these issues. She stated that;

“The problem with this list is that it may reflect people’s emotional orientations rather than their logical or scientific views. It is true that the state and society would unconsciously like to see schools as social institutes rather than educational ones. This is why they prioritise supporting student understanding of Islamic principles and citizenship” (Principal 6)

Another interviewee blamed the education system for the inappropriate priorities of education. He stated that;

“Our education system and philosophy emphasise the need for schools to support students’ understanding of Islamic principles and raising them to be good citizens. However, this should not be given priority over carrying out successful learning and providing students with rich learning opportunities. It is true that some schools appear to be more effective because they support initiatives and measures related to endorsing social values and Islamic instruction” (Principal 7)

Interestingly, two principals expressed completely different views regarding the importance and order of definitions mentioned above. They were positive in encouraging the role of school which gave more priority to supporting students’ understanding of Islamic principles and good citizenship. They believed that the academic success of students might not be an essential quality of effective schools, because of the natural individual differences between students. Furthermore, they believed that the actual role of good schools is to focus on supporting students’ Islamic behaviours and social values. One of these principals believed that raising students to be good citizens and loyal to their national culture is a must to achieve their academic success, and to acquire the necessary skills for future employment. He argued that good schools should inculcate the goals of society as a whole in students. As a result, this would impact on their motivation positively to achieve academic success.

Both principals believed that focusing on the achievement of academic success without giving priority to social values might not be helpful for both individuals and community, and might not reflect school effectiveness in this case. The first one commented;

“Academic success of students can obviously be achieved, especially if we know that there are individual differences between students. I believe that focusing school tasks around social values and Islamic principles would be helpful in bridging the gap between various levels of students. I mean we cannot provide students with equal learning opportunities without raising them and the school staff as a whole on the high level of Islamic values and principles. Therefore, social values should come first (Principal 7)

The second interviewee who prioritised Islamic principles said;

“Schools should focus more on offering students more support for their understanding of Islam and citizenship, because without being able to create a committed and loyal generation to its religion, culture and social norms, the school will hardly be able to help students achieve their academic success. Besides, students who are motivated by the goals of their societies are more able to be successful in their academic learning than students who are led by their individual targets (Principal 8)

To sum up this part of the interview, most interviewees strongly believed that the definitions provided above were all important to define SE. They also strongly believed that these different statements should be integrated into one definition of SE. However, most principals (80%) disagreed that schools should give priority to supporting student understanding of Islamic principles or development of good citizenship over achieving student academic success or preparing them for future employment. Two principals argued that schools should revolve around social and religious targets, as these would be more effective.

7.3.2. Interviewees’ Perceptions of School Effectiveness Characteristics

Interviewees were asked to consider the results of the second part of the questionnaire, which identified the most and least important factors that could contribute to SE from the perspectives of stakeholders. These factors were categorised into five types: School

Factors, Teaching and Learning Factors, Student Factors, School-Home Relationship Factors and Local Community Factors.

In this section of the interview analysis, the results were displayed to principals who were asked to consider these before indicating their agreement or disagreement with the level of importance for SE, and to justify their responses. The interview analysis identified the range of views among the principals regarding SE characteristics. These views were classified in terms of factors based on the highest and lowest mean scores. These factors are set out below:

7.3.2.1. School Factors

For school factors, the following items were seen as the most important (based on mean scores) from the participants' views:

1. The school has a clear plan for development
2. The school conforms to UAE heritage and culture
3. There is a good relationship between staff and students.

The least important school factors were found to be the following

1. Excellence is rewarded
2. The school offers extra-curricular activities
3. The school evaluates its progress.

Table 7.2 below shows samples of the interviewees' responses and justifications regarding the first part (school factors) of ES characteristics.

Table 7 2 Interviewees' responses and justifications of school factors

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
Agree with the most important School factors for SE	10	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clear planning, commitment to local culture and good relations in the school community are all vital for SE</i>
Disagree with the most important School factors for SE	0	0	
Agree with the least	6	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Not helpful, irrelevant to SE.</i>

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
important School factors for SE			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discriminative factors in terms of encouraging competitiveness instead of collaboration</i>
Disagree with the least important School factors for SE	4	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The school should evaluate its progress measure its achievement.</i> • <i>Agreed that the least important ones are not crucial for SE</i>

It is clear that the stakeholders' responses to the questionnaire items were supported by the participating principals in the interviews. For example, all interviewees strongly agreed with the importance of "a clear plan for development" and "professional development to improve their teaching", along with "UAE heritage and culture" and "a good relationship between staff and students", for an effective school and commented;

"I believe that without a clear plan for any school, commitment to local culture and good relations in the school community, the school will neither be able to achieve its goals, nor, of course be effective" (Principal 1)

Additionally, she suggested that teacher development needed to be taken into account for an effective school;

"Teachers' professional development can also be considered one of the most important means for achieving effectiveness of schools" (Principal 1)

One of the principals raised the issue of the lack of planning:

"Our major problem in schools is that we do not have effective planning, and when we have plans, these are mostly vague and ambiguous" (Principal 5)

Another principal believed in effective planning leading to effective schooling; however, he pointed out the irrelevance of the national plans, which he felt were ineffective;

"Effective planning should lead to effective schooling, but I am not sure who plans for whom, we are implementing the national education plans rather than relevant plans, that's why planning is ineffective. I agree that planning clearly is one of the most important requirements for an effective school" (Principal 9)

As far as those factors seen as least important, such as “Excellence is rewarded”, “The school offers co-curricular activities” and “The school evaluates its progress” are concerned, some principals considered these factors to be less important:

“Yes, planning, loyalty to the national culture and good communication and relations in school reflect its effectiveness. I also believe that incentives and extra-curricular activities and routines of evaluating progress all do not help school to be more effective” (Principal 4)

One of the principals gave an explanation for his answers;

“the problem with these factors (less important ones) is that they are discriminative, for example giving rewards to good students or teachers will enhance competition which has negative impacts on effectiveness and achievement of school outcomes, instead of giving incentives and rewards to teams which may be more fruitful and encourage cooperation which will ultimately promote effectiveness.” (Principal 8)

While others thought that they were important, especially the evaluation progress;

“As for those of less importance, I agree with the first two, but the last one is very important and school should evaluate and measure its achievement regularly” (Principal 1)

“...but evaluating progress is necessary for any school to promote its level of effectiveness” (Principal 3)

“...how do you know and develop a school if you won’t evaluate its achievements from time to time?” (Principal 5)

7.3.2.2. Teaching and Learning Factors

The most important teaching and learning factors (based on the mean scores) were found to be the following:

1. The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity.

2. There is an appropriate environment for learning
3. Teachers are committed and well qualified.

The least important teaching and learning factors were:

1. Teachers expect students to learn.
2. Learning is monitored.
3. Teachers support extracurricular activity.

Table 7.3 below shows interviewees' responses and justifications regarding the second aspect of ES characteristics (Teaching and learning factors).

Table 7 3 Interviewees' responses and justifications of teaching and learning factors

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
Agree with the most important School factors for SE	7	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Effective learning requires a comfortable atmosphere</i> • <i>Effective learning requires high quality of committed teachers</i> • <i>Promoting Islamic instruction could be helpful for SE</i>
Disagree with the most important School factors for SE	3	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Believing that teaching students social values or promoting their understanding of Islamic principles can be carried out by many other parties and social institutions such as the family and media</i>
Agree with the least important School factors for SE	7	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teachers' expectations, extracurricular activities and monitoring learning are not important for SE</i>
Disagree with the least important School factors for SE	3	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Extra-curricular activities are important for effectiveness</i>

The interview results were in conformity with the stakeholders' responses to the questionnaire items such as "*the school promotes Islamic and Arab identity*", "*there is an appropriate environment for learning*" and "*teachers are committed and well qualified*" and the majority of principals (70%) recognised these factors as very important. As one of the principals indicated;

"No doubt that the learning environment is the most important. If we need to be very effective, students should receive the best and most comfortable

atmosphere. This may not be done without providing them [students] with high quality teachers who are really dedicated to the job. I also agree that promoting the Islamic culture will assist school to achieve the community goals” (Principal 1)

Similarly,

“I strongly believe the learning environment is the most important; teacher commitment also reflects the level of school quality. I also think that the school should promote Islamic culture to be effective” (Principal 6)

Other principals displayed similar views;

“Yes, they are extremely important, especially an appropriate learning environment without which learning will be tough for all” (Principal 3)

“I am not sure about these factors. But I believe all of them are important for any effective school” (Principal 10)

However, the other principals (30%) did not consider “Islamic culture” as an important factor for an effective school;

“I disagree with the first one as most important because promoting Islamic culture is not the major role of schools, whether effective or not” (Principal 2)

Regarding the least important factors, the majority of the principals (70%) upheld “Class time and resources are used well” and “Teachers support extracurricular activity” as the least important factors;

“I further believe that teachers’ expectations, extracurricular activities and monitoring learning are not all that important for effective schools” (Principal 6)

“I agree that the least ones are not that important” (Principal 5)

7.3.2.3. Student Factors

The most important student factors (based on the mean scores) were found to be the following:

1. Teachers emphasise the positive behaviour of their students
2. Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential
3. There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all

The least important student factors were:

1. Students are highly motivated in terms of learning
2. Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills
3. There is the provision of effective counseling services.

Table 7.4 below shows interviewees' responses and justifications regarding the third part of ES characteristics (student factors).

Table 7 4 Interviewees' responses and justifications of student factors

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
Agree with the most important School factors for SE	8	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Good indicators for SE.</i>• <i>Promoting students' potential is one of a good schools' tasks</i>• <i>Providing students with equal learning opportunities is crucial for SE</i>• <i>Student positive behaviour is a major target for effective schools</i>
Disagree with the most important School factors for SE	2	20	<i>Student positive behaviour is not the responsibility of schools only</i>
Agree with the least important School factors for SE	6	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Developing student thinking and motivating them to learn can be extra tasks for schools</i>
Disagree with the least important School factors for SE	4	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Motivating students is extremely important along with extracurricular activities</i>• <i>Developing higher thinking order skills of students should be very important and a good indicator of ES</i>

With regard to the items “*Teachers emphasise the positive behaviour of their students*” and “*Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential*” along with “*the provision of equal learning opportunities for all*”, the interview results also supported the

stakeholders' answers to the questionnaires, with more than three quarters (80%) indicating positive reflections on these factors, as in the following statement:

"...of course positive behaviour of students and working hard are considered the best indicators for effective schools. I also believe that providing students with equal learning opportunities is most important for school effectiveness"
(Principal 1)

On the other hand, Principal 1 contradicted herself by indicating that "Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills" and "Students are highly motivated in terms of learning" as the least important factors;

"...however, student motivation and creative thinking skills are less important for an effective school, because these characteristics are not stable, and beyond a school's ability to enhance or develop significantly" (Principal 1)

Similarly, Principals 8, 9 and 10 made apparently contradictory comments,

"I believe this order of most and least important factors is fine, because equal learning and student behaviours capabilities are all more important than creative thinking or motivation for example" (Principal 8)

Another principal did not see these factors as very important,

"In fact I disagree with this result for the most important factors of ES, because student positive behaviour is not the responsibility of schools only, the same can be said about encouraging students to achieve their learning goals"
(Principal 3)

On the other hand, 60% of principals did support the terms "Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills" and "Students are highly motivated in terms of learning" as the least important factors,

"I also disagree with those of less importance. They are very important because student motivation, which is the major task of successful schools and

promoting the level of skills students are acquiring, are all the major tasks for good schools” (Principal 3)

This could be related to students’ learning experience and schooling system, because the system may not provide students with the skills that students need to promote creative thinking.

7.3.2.4. School-Home Relationship Factors

The most important school-home relationship factors that had the highest means were found to be the following:

1. Parents are regularly informed about their child’s progress
2. Parents are involved in their child’s learning
3. Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom

The least important school-home relationship factors were:

1. There is an active and supportive parents’ committee,
2. Parents’ days are well attended,
3. Parents are proud of the school

Table 7.5 below shows interviewees’ responses and justifications regarding the fourth section of ES characteristics (school-home relationship factors).

Table 7 5 Interviewees’ responses and justifications of school-home relationship factors

Interviewees’ Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees’ Justifications
Agree with the most important School factors for SE	4	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Open channel of communication between school and home and families engagement in their children’s learning are the best indicators of SE</i> • <i>Parents should contribute to their children’s learning</i> • <i>Parents’ involvement does not only contribute to the achievement of their children’s learning outcomes, but also reflect their good relations</i>

			<i>with school</i>
Disagree with the most important School factors for SE	6	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parents should follow up their children's progress, not schools only</i> • <i>The involvement of families in learning helps significantly in achieving the school outcomes</i> • <i>Parents' involvement in students' learning is not consistent, and differs from one family to another</i> • <i>Parents should not be responsible about their children's learning</i> • <i>Parents have a very wide range of different experiences that may confuse schools' mission.</i>
Agree with the least important School factors for SE	6	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parents' attitudes are of less importance because they do not affect the whole process directly</i> • <i>More positive attitudes of parents towards school reflect the level of SE, but with less effect</i>
Disagree with the least important School factors for SE	4	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parents' pride if school or attendance are out of any school's responsibility or control</i> • <i>Parents' involvement and attitudes are not stable, are biased and not systematic or dependent upon scientific criteria</i> • <i>Parents' preference of certain schools may reflect prestigious reputations rather than a reflection of good schooling</i>

The interview results showed that some principals supported the factors “*Parents are regularly informed about their child's progress*” and “*Parents are involved in their child's learning*” as important for school effectiveness,

“I think an open channel of communication between school and home, and the family's engagement in their children's learning are the best indicators of a school's effectiveness in this regard” (Principal 2)

“Sure, the involvement of families in learning helps significantly in achieving the school's outcomes and therefore, prompting school effectiveness level.”
(Principal 3)

While the others did not consider these factors as very important;

“I disagree with this result because it is the responsibility of parents to follow up their children's progress, not schools. In fact I am also uncertain how to involve parents systematically in their children's learning, especially in the classroom” (Principal 1)

“I disagree that parents’ assistance to their children would help in prompting school effectiveness” (Principal 10)

And another pointed out her dissatisfaction by claiming that;

“If school effectiveness will be achieved by parents’ engagement in students’ learning, then what is the role of school itself in this regard?” (Principal 6)

When we look at the least important factors for SE, the majority of principals believed that “Parents’ days are well attended” and “Parents are proud of the school” were regarded as the least important factors in this category;

“It is true that parents’ attitudes are of less importance because they do not affect the whole process directly (Principal 8)

“However, it is correct that parents’ positive attitudes towards school reflect SE with less importance than their involvement in learning” (Principal 4)

As seen above, the degree of importance of the aforementioned factors varies from one principal to another.

7.3.2.5. Local Community Factors

Based on the questionnaire results, the following factors that had the highest mean related to local community were:

1. Staff play an active role in the community,
2. Pupils play an active role in the community,
3. Members of the community play an active role in the school.

The least important local community factors were:

1. There are a variety of societies and clubs in the school,
2. There are good links with local industry,

3. Supporting social services is a major activity for the school.

Table 7.6 below shows interviewees' responses and justifications regarding the fifth aspect of ES characteristics (local community factors).

Table 7 6 Interviewees' responses and justifications of local community factors

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
Agree with the most important School factors for SE	10	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>School should be the most important community institution</i> • <i>School and community should play mutual roles</i> • <i>Offer students real opportunities to learn from their daily life activities</i> • <i>Students should be very active in the community.</i> • <i>It (school) should also allow social institutes to participate in carrying out the curriculum in the school</i> • <i>Students' roles should go beyond the school building to provide them with real life experiences</i> • <i>Social activities of any school should be mostly student-centred</i>
Disagree with the most important School factors for SE	0	0	---
Agree with the least important School factors for SE	7	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Societies reflect the natural social role of the school</i> • <i>Supporting social activities should be one of the schools' regular tasks</i> • <i>Effective school encourages attendance of as many activities as possible which indicate its social role</i> • <i>Social clubs can play a positive role in improving SE</i>
Disagree with the least important School factors for SE	3	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>School should support social services, but this should not be its major activity, because there are many other important tasks for schools, such as the implementation of the curriculum....</i> • <i>Social services should be a major, or even a minor task for schools, because this would negatively affect its mission, which should be focused on academic success of students inside school</i>

In the interview, “*Members of the community play an active role in the school*” “and “*Pupils play an active role in the community*” were also considered by all the principals as the most important factors for the SE. One of the interviewees stressed the importance of the school as a community institution;

“Definitely, school should not only play an active role in the community but it should be the most important community institution, and that’s why community should exchange this role with school” (Principal 1)

However, she believed that societies, clubs and social services were less important, compared to her statement above;

“School should be supporting social services but this should not be its major activity, because there are many other important tasks for , such as implementation of the curriculum...” (Principal 1)

Similarly, another principal indicated that,

“Students’ roles in the community should be well organised by schools in order to achieve its goals. That is true, but I don’t think that the social services should be a major or even a minor task for schools, because this would negatively affect its mission, which should be focused on academic success of students inside school” (Principal 4)

Another indicated the importance of real-life , and agreed with the least important factors:

Yes, agree. In fact I believe that students’ roles should go beyond school building if we want to equip them with real life experiences which affect SE positively. I also believe that clubs inside school and the school’s role outside the building are effective, but should be considered very important for SE” (Principal 6)

While some others considered the most and least important factors as mutually inclusive and important;

I believe that school and community cannot help developing each other. I also believe that supporting social activities should be one of the schools’ regular tasks (Principal 2).

7.3.3. Qualities of Effective School Leadership

Interviewees were asked to consider the results of part three of the questionnaire, which identified the most and least important qualities of effective school leadership from the perspectives of stakeholders. The results of the questionnaire indicated that the following were the most important (based on mean scores) qualities of effective school leadership:

1. The school leader is very experienced
2. The school leader shows a high level of ethics and morals
3. The school leader manages the school competently

The least important school qualities were found to be the following:

1. The school leader shows that he/she has high expectations
2. The school leader is creative and innovative
3. The school leader is physically active

Table 7.7 below shows interviewees' responses and justifications regarding the most (and) important qualities of effective school leadership.

Table 7 7 Interviewees' responses and justifications of the most important qualities of effective school leadership

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
Agree with the most important School factors for SE	10	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep experience in managing schools, dealing with staff and understanding the school community and environment enable school leader be more effective • Experience would assist the leader to manage school competently • Experience and morals play crucial roles in a leader's effectiveness and help him manage school more effectively. • The most important is the leader's ethics and experience, without which he won't manage school successfully • The principal's ethics occupy the highest priority, because he should be a model of fairness and support to staff and students". • Effective schools can only be managed by leaders of high ethics and deep experience
Disagree with the most	0	0	

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
important School factors for SE			---
Agree with the least important School factors for SE	4	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without the help of other stakeholders, any principal on his/her own cannot inspire staff motivation and creativity, which help in daily decisions. Good principalship does not necessarily depend on motivating the school staff and pushing them to be creative Physical activity should not be considered important, because he is not and cannot be responsible for each activity done at school Moving physically is important but not as much as creativity or expectations
Disagree with the least important School factors for SE	6	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being creative means being able to manage, and showing high expectations means knowing how to motivate staff and students, which is really important Principals' expectations affect staff and students' performance, and even outside community participation. Any successful manager should be creative and has to do his best to tailor official education policy into applicable practices Principals need to be creative every day because they are dealing with a wide range of different people, teachers, students, parents and even different tasks

The analysis of the principals' responses to those factors with the highest and lowest mean score of effective leadership qualities indicates that all interviewees agreed with the list of the most important qualities, and most disagreed with the list of the least important qualities. Some of them believed that the principal's experience is an extremely important quality, because it enables him/her to manage school effectively, and understand staff, students, school community and school environment;

"Deep experience in managing schools, dealing with staff and understanding the school community and environment enables the school leader to be more effective. It is also impossible for any school leader to be effective if he is unfair, for example, in dealing with staff" (Principal 1)

"It is also important for a school leader to manage and have a history of successful management of schools in order to be effective"(Principal 2).

“His experience would definitely help him manage school competently and be an effective leader” (Principal 3).

“In our society, a school leader should have very deep and long experience to be effective” (Principal 5).

“This list is the best indicator of successful principals. The leader’s experience and morals are crucial for effectiveness, and can help him manage school more effectively” (Principal 6).

Interviewees also commented on the importance of ethics for a school leader, especially in being a model for staff, students, parents and community. They also remarked that without ethics and morals, a principal’s mission might be impossible. Some of them commented on this issue saying;

“It is also impossible for any school leader to be effective if he is unfair, for example, in dealing with staff” (Principal 1).

“The most important aspect is the leader’s ethics and experience without which he won’t manage the school successfully” (Principal 2),

“The principal’s ethics occupy the highest priority because he should be a model, especially of fairness, and support to staff and students” (Principal 3).

“Professional ethics is a must for effective leaders. You cannot imagine how staff and students would see the principal if he/she does not set an example for them. If that happens, school would be corrupted, with no need to talk about effectiveness then” (Principal 3).

“Definitely, principals’ ethics provide all school community members with an example of the expected outcomes. If the leader is unable to demonstrate high level of profession ethics it would be reflected negatively on school effectiveness and achievements of its goals” (Principal 8).

“The leader who enjoys a high quality of ethics and morals can have better quality of staff and students, especially the ability to gather all in a

homogenous community, even if there are differences between the multicultural backgrounds of members” (Principal 9).

“The first two - deep experience and high morals - will lead to the most important (competent management), because effective schools can only be managed by leaders with high ethics and deep experience” (Principal 10).

However, interviewees strongly disagreed about the list of the least important school leadership qualities resulting from the questionnaire. They indicated that principals’ expectations and creativity should be within the list of the most important effective leadership qualities. Interviewees gave various reasons for their arguments, such as creativity being a must for the successful management of a school, along with high expectations concerning staff and student motivation and performance, as well as solving daily problems,

“Being creative means being able to manage, and showing high expectations means knowing how to motivate staff and students, which is really important” (Principal 1).

“Principals’ expectations affect staff and students’ performance, and even outside community participation. Therefore, this quality should be included in the most important list. Besides that, any successful manager should be creative and has to do his best to tailor official education policy into applicable practices” (Principal 2).

“Principals need to be creative every day, because they are dealing with a wide range of different people, teachers, students, parents, and even different tasks” (Principal 6).

“Creativity is as important as experience and ethics, because principals, who cannot provide direct solutions to their daily life problems, will never be able to be effective to lead a school to achieve its goals. The same can be said of their high expectations, without which staff and students’ performance would remain at its minimum limits” (Principal 8).

“Leaders’ expectations and creativity should be added to the most important, because schools cannot be managed effectively without a leader who can solve wide range of problems he faces every day and who may not offer challenge and excitement for staff and students through high expectations” (Principal 10)

Some interviewees believed that principals’ creativity, innovation and high expectations were less important than other qualities mentioned above. They interpreted this by saying that school leaders in the UAE are struggling with routine and readymade procedures that reduce the need for creativity. Others said that expectations were not valid measurements for effective leadership;

“Without the help of other stakeholders, any principal on his/her own cannot inspire staff motivation and creativity which help in daily decisions. Good principalship does not necessarily depend on motivating the school staff and pushing them to be creative” (Principal 5).

“The education process is virtually a group of routines and readymade procedures for principals to implement” (Principal 7).

On the other hand, most interviewees considered that principals’ physical activities and energetic efforts to monitor the ongoing daily routines at school as important, but not as a determinant factor of school effectiveness. Some commented;

“I think it is important for any principal to make daily rounds and spot checking in the school to ensure that activities are well run and to motivate the school community on the ground, but his rounds should not be considered significantly important” (Principal 2).

“His physical activity should not be considered important, because he is not and cannot be responsible for every activity done at school” (Principal 7).

“I think the principal who does more rounds in the school every day is generally more effective than the one who stays in the office. But this should not be one of the most important (Principal 8).

“His physical movement is important but not as important as creativity or expectations” (Principal 10).

7.3.4. Change Management (Improving SE and developing School Leadership)

The last two sections of the interview were designed to find out the principals' views regarding the most and least important strategies for improving school effectiveness and school leadership. Interviewees were asked to express their individual views regarding the best methods to improve schools effectiveness in light of the questionnaire results. A list of strategies that were found to be most important from the perspectives of the stakeholders was displayed to interviewees who were then asked to express their agreement or disagreement with it along with their own commentaries. The same was asked from the interviewees regarding the ways for improving school leadership. The following two sections display the interview analysis of principals' responses to the management of change.

7.3.4.1. Strategies for Improving School Effectiveness

The following strategies for improving SE were found to be the most important factors from the perspective of stakeholders, based on mean scores as identified from the questionnaire:

1. The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leadership and staff.
2. The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional learning community.
3. The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teachers.

The least important strategies for improving SE from the perspective of stakeholders were found to be the following:

1. School leaders should undertake a leadership education programme and be provided with leadership experiences prior to becoming a school principal.

2. The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria.
3. It is important to have an independent governmental body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools.

Table 7.8 below shows interviewees' responses and justifications regarding the most and least important strategies for improving SE.

Table 7 8 Interviewees' responses and justifications of most and least important strategies for improving SE

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
Agree with the most important school factors for SE	7	70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shared responsibility with staff in planning for school performance is important to improve school</i> • <i>Team work requires establishing a professional learning community</i> • <i>Schools can only improve if there are agreed targets, strategic goals and clear vision by all staff who work together in consistent teamwork and a safe atmosphere</i>
Disagree with the most important school factors for SE	3	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>ADEC as a specialised government educational body should intervene in recruiting principals and teachers, instead of the MOE, which still follows out of date processes</i> • <i>There are other more important methods, such as the importance of integrating Islamic instruction and local culture into curriculum</i> • <i>School leadership should manage change by implementing effective processes and practices, because this leadership is the only party that is aware of current problems and how to solve them</i>
Agree with the least important school factors for SE	6	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>High quality criteria to measure performance of individuals and schools are very important, because they motivate all towards the common target goal</i> • <i>Schools may not be improved without direct top-management intervention, especially if it was done by an independent body like the ADEC, which would standardise the process in order to improve schools</i>
Disagree with the least important school factors for SE	4	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>School leader training could be conducted during service, and setting out theoretical criteria for success that do not accord with the reality of the situation at schools might not be fruitful or helpful in improving schools</i> • <i>Measuring success can be delayed</i>

Most principals (70%) agreed with and supported the questionnaire results regarding the most important strategies for improving schools, while 60% agreed with the least important ones. Those who agreed with the results of the questionnaire regarding the most important strategies interpreted their responses differently. For example, some of them believed the item “school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff” is an important strategy to reflect the school community’s shared responsibility for improving their school, because they thought that planning and working collaboratively in teams and in a safe environment would enable them to learn from each other, and help schools be more effective.

“The first means that school leadership shares staff planning for school performance, which is a must to improve school and work as a team on certain strategic goals. The second focuses on the importance of teamwork, without which improvement could hardly be achieved. Teamwork requires all to establish a professional learning community where all members learn from each other, a fact that would certainly improve school” (Principal 1)

“Schools can only improve if there are agreed targets, strategic goals and clear vision by all staff, who work together in consistent teamwork and a safe atmosphere” (Principal 4)

Some of them said that they had been working on these important strategies, but it would take some time to realise their outcomes, while others believed that such important strategies were all the responsibility of the school leader. Dealing with different schools’ issues, as explained in the following, makes principals feel that they are constantly under a high level of pressure:

“In my experience as a principal for 20 years, I see that the school work is too cumbersome ... The school principal deals with different organisational and educational policies, oversees teachers and school staff, and follows up all school plans; all of these responsibilities should be done in a parallel manner. As a result he or she finds himself 'often' lagging behind in achieving the required schooling duties...” (Principal 10)

“Actually, we started dealing with teachers as partners in setting out school plans and vision, but we need time to make all aware of the process to achieve the strategic goals of education” (Principal 6)

“I think it is the school leader who can involve staff and even students in setting out an ambitious vision, who can deliver tasks in teams, and who can support all to feel secure. These conditions are extremely important to improve schools. But the problem is that many leaders are implementing the national curriculum under certain specific inflexible procedures which lessens their effectiveness” (Principal 7)

Some principals focused on the importance of team work to improve schools.

“All of these strategies will lead to improving schools, because they all revolve round shared responsibility and a safe environment, and because without teamwork, nothing can be really improved” (Principal 8)

“People should work together in collaborative teams and in a safe environment to achieve school goals. You cannot imagine school staff working individually, for example, to promote student learning” (Principal 10)

Other interviewees paid attention to the importance of a safe environment for any school to be improved;

“The whole process cannot be well managed and school cannot be improved if the learning environment is not safe for all parties and students” (Principal 1)

Some interviewees who disagreed with the most important strategies for improving schools suggested other strategies as more important, such as integrating more Islamic instruction into the curriculum; using more effective methods for recruiting school staff; and imparting leadership with the responsibility for school improvement.

One of the principals made it clear that;

“There are other more important methods, such as the importance of integrating Islamic instruction and local culture into the curriculum, along

with using modern technologies. And ADEC, as a specialised government educational body should intervene in recruiting principals and teachers, instead of the MOE, which still follows out of date processes. I also believe that school leadership should manage change by implementing effective processes and practices, because it is the only party that is aware of current problems and how to solve them” (Principal 3)

On the other hand, some interviewees claimed that school leader training could be conducted during service, and setting out criteria for success was not a target by itself, and may not be very helpful in improving schools. Other interviewees did not support government intervention in school operations, and were for more freedom in managing schools’ improvement. Other interviewees called for the MOE to allow specialised government bodies to intervene in recruiting leaders, and setting high quality improvement criteria for all schools. Some interviewees warned against recruiting high quality leaders, due to the problems this might create, especially in light of the shortage of this category of work force in the UAE.

“It is true for leadership to have high qualification experiences, but these issues can be carried out during, and not prior to work. Measuring success can be delayed for a while, let’s focus on work, process, and goals before we go deep into evaluations. This may take much time and effort, as improvement requires good intentions and clear planning. Why should government seek to interfere in everything? Let schools bear the responsibility for their achievement. However, these least important remain important” (Principal 7)

“High quality criteria to measure performances of individual and school are very important because they motivate all towards the common target goal. I am also sure that schools may not be improved without direct top management interference, especially if it was done by an independent body like the ADEC which would standardise the whole process, in order not just to improve one school but all schools together in parallel” (Principal 2)

“The MOE should also be selective when assigning them; I mean only those who proved their abilities to improve schools can either continue as school leaders or be assigned to new ones. But I believe this would create many

problems, especially in light of the shortage of effective national school leaders” (Principal 10)

Interestingly, an interviewee indicated that the two lists of most and least important factors should be reversed and swapped in their order of importance, so that the factors that were most important had to take the place of those of less importance and vice versa. He commented;

Ambitious visions can be achieved only when there is a well-qualified and experienced leadership. Teamwork can only be helpful when there is a standardisation process for all staff to work on, in addition to the inspections held by independent government bodies, which are extremely important to ensure... Therefore, I really wished that the least important factors in the list be placed on top of the list, instead of those factors already considered as the most important” (Principal 10)

7.3.4.2. Ways of developing school leadership

The results of the questionnaire indicated that the following items (based on the highest mean score) were the most important ways of developing school leadership from the perspective of the stakeholders:

1. The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff.
2. The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional learning community.
3. The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teachers.

The least important ways of developing school leadership (based on the lowest mean score) from the perspective of the stakeholders were found to be the following:

1. School leaders should take part in induction leadership training programmes and be provided with leadership experiences prior to becoming school principal.

2. The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria.
3. It is important to have an independent governmental body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools.

Table 7.9 below shows interviewees' responses and justifications regarding the most and least important ways for developing school leadership.

Table 7 9 Interviewees' responses and justifications of most and least important ways of developing school leadership

Interviewees' Responses	No. out of 10	%	Interviewees' Justifications
Agree with the most important School factors for SE	5	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exchanging experience through useful and well planned discussions</i> • <i>Discussions should be focused and should deal with daily problems</i> • <i>It would be helpful for principals to learn from teachers as an available resource for them all of the time</i>
Disagree with the most important School factors for SE	5	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discussions would not help leaders improve because of their different management styles, individual school conditions and individual leaders' experiences and qualification</i> • <i>Cooperating with teachers would improve the quality of school effectiveness, but not that of leadership, as the teachers had not experienced school management before</i>
Agree with the least important School factors for SE	5	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>High relevant qualification provides principals with the necessary knowledge and understanding of his school environment</i> • <i>Principals who can gain a master's degree or conduct action research will certainly be improved</i>
Disagree with the least important School factors for SE	5	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>High qualifications would not be helpful, and training would not be acceptable, either for the resistance principals showed, or for the time it took even for well-qualified trainers and mentors</i> • <i>Qualifications like masters degrees and training by other leaders may not benefit principals significantly, because both remain theoretical and removed from actual practice, which is necessary for any improvement</i>

Analysis of the interviewees' responses (based on the highest and lowest mean scores) indicated that only half of the participants agreed with the results of the questionnaire regarding both the most and least important ways for developing school leadership. Those who supported these results argued that it was important for leaders to exchange

experience through useful and well-planned discussions. They added that discussions should be focused, and should deal with the daily problems they face.

“If the discussions with other leaders are focused and relevant to daily problems, it can be an effective means of exchanging experiences and improving leadership” (Principal 1)

“I think principals need to improve through extensive and regular (maybe on a weekly basis) discussions with peers who have similar conditions and problems” (Principal 6)

However, those who were not in support of the idea that regular discussion with other leaders might improve school principals interpreted their responses in different ways. For example, some believed that discussions would not help leaders improve, because of their different management styles, specific school conditions and different leadership experiences or qualification. Others said that most discussions were not deep or useful:

“I disagree; discussions with leaders may not improve an individual significantly because every leader has his different management style, school conditions, personal experiences and qualifications. Whilst cooperating with teachers would improve the quality of school effectiveness, it would not necessarily improve the quality of leadership as the teachers had not experienced school management before.” (Principal 1).

“Most discussions may revolve round surface issues rather than deep concerns” (Principal 3)

“Most regular discussions are focused on daily problems which are different from one school context to another” (Principal 5)

“Everyone prefers to follow his own style and be committed to his school culture” (Principal 7)

Those who supported working with teachers to improve leadership believed that it would be helpful for principals to learn from teachers as an available resource;

“Involving teachers in the process of school improvement will certainly help leaders improve and acquire many management skills” (Principal 2)

Involving teachers in working to improve schools will definitely bear some benefits for principals to improve and exchange experiences and knowledge, especially in that the teachers are the best available people who know everything about the school” (Principal 6)

“This process will give principals rich opportunities from a wide range of teacher’s experiences” (Principal 8)

However, half the interviewees (50%) disagreed that this would be helpful. They commented that such cooperation could help school improve but not leadership;

“Cooperating with teachers would improve the quality of school effectiveness; it would not necessarily improve the quality of leadership as the teachers had not experienced school management before.” (Principal 1)

“Teachers may not be able to help leaders take decisions and their cooperation would not be enough to help principal improve” (Principal 3)

“Cooperating with teachers may not help principals improve because the managerial way followed mostly by principals does not give teachers deep insights into school and leadership improvement” (Principal 5)

“Teachers may not be able to systematically improve leaders because it is not their job to do so” (Principal 7)

The principals who agreed that undertaking master’s degrees or conducting relevant research would be helpful remarked that highly relevant qualifications provide principals with the necessary knowledge and understanding of their school environment, especially if that was done during service.

“High qualifications may improve school leadership because they enable him to obtain modern knowledge, theory and deep understanding of school environment” (Principal 1)

“Leaders’ qualifications, like master’s, can be useful if taken during service, because the leader can link theory to practice effectively, and thus be improved” (Principal 3)

“Principals who can get the master’s degree or conduct action research will certainly be improved” (Principal 8)

Some interviewees disagreed with the fact that obtaining a master’s degree and being mentored was important ways to improve leaders. They believed that higher qualifications would not be helpful, and training would not be acceptable, either due to a certain reticence on the part of the principals, or to shortage of time, or even because of a lack of well-qualified trainers and mentors. Some of them commented;

“You may never find a school leader in the UAE schools to have positive attitudes towards being trained by another leader, because this issue is sensitive and implies negative message for trainees” (Principal 1)

“Qualifications like master’s degrees and training by other leaders may not benefit principals significantly, because both remain theoretical and away from actual practice, which is necessary for any improvement” (Principal 2)

“Leadership is like driving a bus. You can never improve theoretically only” (Principal 4)

“The culture of being trained or mentored by others is not effective in the UAE and may complicate the professional development of school leaders” (Principal 5)

“Being mentored by other experienced people from outside school and getting the master’s degree are extra and secondary” (Principal 6)

“Being mentored by other school leaders should not be listed within ways of improvement, because each leader is resistant in this regard for personal sensitivity” (Principal 7)

“The question about mentoring is the shortage of mentors” (Principal 9)

7.4. Conclusion

Chapter Seven displayed a qualitative investigation of the principals' perceptions - collected through one-to-one interviews - regarding a myriad of issues related to school and leadership effectiveness, such as the definition and characteristics of effective schools, school factors, effective school leadership qualities and change management - that is how to improve school effectiveness and develop school leadership

The researcher attempted to validate the findings of the questionnaire treated earlier in chapter six - regarding the current research questions and the principals' feedback on significant issues against the interviews conducted with school principals. It was found that there were some contradictions concerning the results of the two analyses (questionnaire and interview) in more than one area, such as the definitions of SE and improving school leadership.

The results of most other investigated issues were found to be consistent to a certain extent, using the two study instruments - the questionnaires and the interviews. In the subsequent final chapter, a cross-validation of the results obtained using the aforementioned tools of research will be carried out to paint a picture of the current state of school and leadership effectiveness practices, and the perspectives of improvement as perceived by the schools' stakeholders, namely the principals, the teachers, the students and the parents.

CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

8.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and conclusions drawn from analysis of the collected data using questionnaires (Chapter Six) and interviews (Chapter Seven), through a cross-validation process where data was compared to discern any patterns or trends of consistency or disparity. In this chapter, the researcher attempts to focus on the findings drawn from the perceptions of the stakeholders in relation to the issues addressed in the questionnaire and the interviews, by returning to the research questions of the thesis stated in chapter one. These research questions include a considerable spectrum of topics at the forefront of educators' and leaders' concerns in the UAE and elsewhere. The purpose here is to address these research questions in light of the quantitative and qualitative analysis formulated in chapters six and seven.

The discussion reported in this final chapter attempts to address the following three overarching high-level research questions:

1. Are current definitions and understanding of school effectiveness and leadership self-evident or problematic?
2. What are the characteristics of effective leadership and effective schools? How are they perceived by practitioners?
3. What strategies should be adopted in order to improve school effectiveness (SE) and leadership effectiveness in the UAE?

Chapter One and the interview template display the context-specific sub-questions that provided the focus for my quantitative and qualitative evidence gathering.

As such, Chapter Eight attempts first to explore and redefine, if possible, the conceptual framework of school effectiveness and school leadership in light of the specific context of the research. Then, the qualities of effective school leadership and prevailing leadership style (s) will be scrutinised, along with whether the respondents see change as possible and desirable from the perspective of Abu Dhabi local stakeholders' perceptions. The particularities of the local context and stakeholders' mindsets in Abu Dhabi might finetune

previous definitions, and therefore shape the typical understanding of the wide-scale reform and initiatives that could be implemented locally in Abu Dhabi. In light of these findings, areas of potential improvement and recommendations are then proposed to enhance current practice within the context of the educational system in the UAE. Some methodological considerations are revisited, proposals for further research prospects are provided, and the limitations of the study are reviewed. Finally, a summary of the researcher's observations is included, and possible areas for future research are considered.

8.2. Part One: Some Methodological Considerations

The researcher was interested in finding means to validate whether both quantitative data collection methods would reveal different meaningful results regarding attitudes of school stakeholders toward the issues addressed in the dissertation; namely school effectiveness, leader effectiveness and school improvement. Additionally, the researcher sought to validate the qualitative data by comparing interpretations of results deduced from different data-collection methods. Mixed methods research that combines numerical data analysis and descriptive narrative was employed to cross-validate the findings, and track the elements of convergence and divergence across the range of stakeholders' perceptions.

8.2.1. Mixed Methods

Mixed methods were used in the present study as a general methodological approach across the stages of data gathering, analysis and discussion. Quantitative and qualitative datasets were employed to secure a high degree of validity, where the quantification of the data and the qualitative interpretation are meant to achieve a multidimensional unpacking of the collected data, in order to respond to the research questions and attend to issues related to the subject of the thesis. Within these two broad categories of research, quantitative research was intended to make use of statistical analyses to obtain findings through a formal and systematic use of statistics. Qualitative research here involves interviews without formal statistical measurements. Quantitative research, as Marczyk et al (2005) suggest, is often used as a source of hypotheses for later testing in qualitative research. Hesse-Biber (2010: 3) contends that within the context of mixed methods, 'what we generally consider qualitative data "words, pictures, and narrative" can be combined with quantitative, numerical data from a larger-scale study on the same issue, allowing our research results to be generalized for future studies and examinations'. The popularity of mixed methods research is due largely to its 'flexibility in simultaneously addressing

multiple and diverse research questions through integrated QUAL and QUAN techniques’ (Teddlie and Sammons, 2010: 116).

8.2.2. Triangulation

To produce a more thorough understanding of the issues addressed within this study, two investigation tools were employed to achieve greater cross-validation of the results and findings. Questionnaires and interviews were blended together to strengthen the research, raise the ratio of validity of the data and give a deeper insight to the topics. Within this perspective, triangulation makes it possible to compare the perceptions of the school stakeholders and determine aspects of consistency or inconsistency. In fact, ‘triangulation ultimately fortifies and enriches a study’s conclusions, making them more acceptable to advocates of both qualitative and quantitative methods’ (Hesse-Biber, 2010: 3-4). Moreover, Oliver-Hoyo and Allen (2006: 43) maintain that ‘Triangulation compares information to determine corroboration; in other words, it is a process of qualitative cross-validation’.

8.2.3. Perceptions

The primary point of concern of the researcher is to cross-examine the perceptions of the stakeholders, and examine the nature and motives of their standpoints, in relation to the issues tackled in the research questions. The quantified numerical analysis of these perceptions conducted in chapter 6 reveals that school effectiveness, leadership effectiveness and school improvement strategies are not perceived identically in most cases. Seidman (2006: 104) claims that ‘researchers do not expect the same questions asked in different group settings to produce the same responses; indeed, it may be preferable that they produce different responses, so that the researchers can gain a rounded understanding of the full range of responses within the target population’.

The study of perceptions makes it possible to confront various individual and idiosyncratic visions and attitudes regarding the issues at stake, reflected in the ways respondents perceive the reality of issues at school. On the other hand, potential strategies of change and reform can be devised in light of these perceptions to improve the current perception of issues within schools, which is the main concern of the thesis.

8.2.4. Major Findings

What is striking about the study findings is that both instruments, the survey and the interview, did not in most cases lead to the same results. Thus, in the first part on the school principals' perceptions of school effectiveness conceptual framework, the results deduced from the questionnaire did not, to all intents and purposes, totally corroborate those detailed from the interviews. Given ample time to spell out their perceptions and express their opinions, the interviewed school principals sometimes looked differently at the same issues they had considered in the questionnaire, reframing the debate on topics they attended to.

8.2.5. Cross-Validation of the Findings

Oliver-Hoyand and Allen (2006) collected data to monitor attitudes of students toward a chemistry class format they implemented in a semester. The data consisted in 55 sets of interviews, 116 sets of survey responses, 90 journal entries, and 38 field note entries. Different data collection methods were intended to achieve robust validation through the use of triangulation. The authors then concluded that 'complete convergence may not always occur in qualitative data'. The article they wrote revealed that surveys were the most unreliable, as they gave results that were inconsistent with those obtained from interviews and journals, and that, although surveys are very efficient at collecting large amounts of data in a short period of time, surveys and interviews are associated with higher potential sources of error than would be found when taking more quantitative measurements, in part due to the response effect - that is, the tendency to give inaccurate or incorrect information.

In the following sections, the researcher attempts to provide some reasons for any noticeable differences between the findings with both instruments.

8.3. Part Two: Redefining School Effectiveness: A Componential Definition

8.3.1. Principals' Perceptions of School Effectiveness

In Part 2, the researcher focuses on the conceptual framework of school effectiveness as delineated by school principals in Abu Dhabi, taking into account the particularities of the educational context in the United Arab Emirates.

8.3.2. The Importance of Context

The concept of school effectiveness was displayed in the questionnaire, and during the interviews, as a breakdown of four factors randomly ordered that enmesh a micro perspective along with a macro perspective, simultaneously. The development of an understanding of Islamic principles was equated with the promotion of good citizenship. These two factors refer to the macro context; that is the societal context of the UAE, where faith and decent civic conduct are valued and highly appreciated. On the other hand, academic success and employment prospects were two constructs closely linked to the school's intrinsic institutional mission and role in society – that is the micro perspective of the school context. According to Wong and Chan (2010), context can be viewed both from a macro and a micro perspective. Context is important from a macro perspective, because it emphasises an understanding of the whole society, and the meaning society has for participants. From a micro perspective, the study of context is the study of the meanings that people ascribe both to their own behaviour and the behaviour of others, in the context of values, practices and underlying structures, such as in schools.

Within this study, schools' stakeholders, namely principals, strongly agreed on a systemic integration of both contexts. For them, blending the four factors is a *sine qua non* for school effectiveness. This means that schools have to perform various instructional and ethical roles simultaneously. In the minds of the schools' stakeholders, the academic success of a school lies primarily in teaching a way of life, not merely factual knowledge. Therefore, students, representing the future work force and citizens, have to be equipped not only with knowledge, but with loyalty to their religion and nation. Gelsthorpe and West-Burnham (2003: 2) maintain that 'the dominant purpose of education in many national systems is economic; the creation of an employable workforce. The key measure of such employability has been seen as literacy and numeracy'.

Figure 8.1 displays the results of both the questionnaire and the interviews, and illustrates the stakeholders' specific componential structure of the definition of school effectiveness, judged as being appropriate to the context of secondary schools in Abu Dhabi.

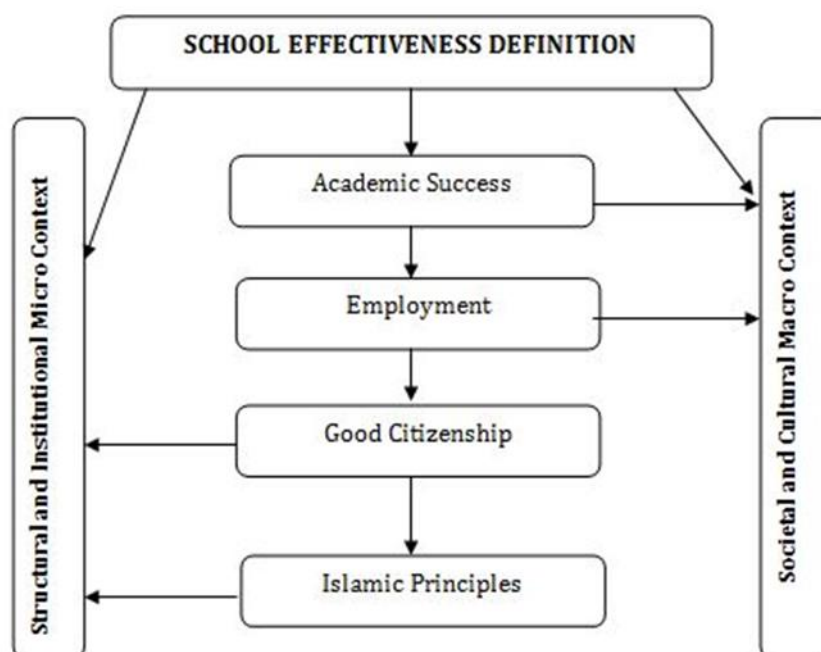


Figure 8 1 Stakeholders' Componential Definition of an Effective School (by researcher)

8.3.3. Working out Operational Definitions

It is too difficult in the field of educational research, to delineate the conceptual framework of the basic concepts, as they are contentious terms with so many meanings and such different resonances in different contexts and cultures. In the present thesis, the respondents to the questionnaire commonly agreed on a definition of school effectiveness that integrates religious and civic principles along with two additional factors; employment and academic success.

At first sight, it might appear that this definition resonates with the societal, cultural and political landscape of the UAE. In a country where different cultures, languages, religions, sects and nationalities co-exist together, schools are expected to preserve Islam and citizenship as sources of inspiration for Emirati citizens in general, and for students in particular. In its policy manual issued in September 2014, ADEC, a non-federal government authority established in September 2005 and responsible for developing education through curricular, pedagogical and school leadership change, made it clear that its mission is 'to produce world class learners who embody a strong sense of culture and heritage, and are prepared to meet global challenges'. Additionally, it called on school leaders to 'implement the issued policies and work towards developing students into independent, well-educated and morally-conscious citizens of Abu Dhabi and the world'.

Abu Dhabi Memorandum on Good Practices for Education and Countering Violent Extremism placed an emphasis on these values in Good Practice number 7, which is centered around increasing and expanding on curricula that emphasise civic education, civic responsibility and human values. This principle states openly that;

“Civic education provides youth with a framework for a collective civic identity and therefore fosters tolerance and the willingness to negotiate and compromise. To be most effective, civic education and its related values must be relevant to the local context and culture. It is also important to consider how best to highlight the value of civic education in light of a greater demand for maths, science, engineering, and medicine rather than social sciences and humanities”.

Nevertheless, compared with the questionnaire data, the interviews revealed quite a different order of importance of the four aforementioned components, as most interviewed principals (8 out of 10) disapproved of the descending order of the school effectiveness definitions that came from the questionnaire, and called for combining them into one. Most of the school principals advocated an operational definition of school effectiveness, where priority is allocated respectively to academic success, employment, Islamic principles and good citizenship. This looks like a much more pragmatic and instrumental definition that relegated the extraneous factors (religion and politics) to a second position. The principals agreed upon the fact that it is not uniquely the responsibility of schools to promote these aspects, and that it is up to the wider social community to address such issues. As a justification for this opinion shift, Principal 1 argued that;

“An effective school in the UAE context must focus on students’ academic success because this is its major task. You know, parents send their children to schools in order to study hard and achieve academic success. They (parents) believe that the only systematic way to carry out their children’s academic success is through schools. I strongly believe that teaching students social values or promoting their understanding of Islamic principles can be carried out by many other parties and social institutions, such as the family and media”.

Principal 2 highlighted the importance of academic success as a priority while emphasising the salient factor of Islamic values.

“However, I believe effective schools should focus on students’ academic success and learning, without ignoring the importance of promoting their Islamic understanding. In other words, effective schooling should integrate these four different aspects of ES definition into one definition”.

It is clear that the interviews did not actually corroborate the results of the questionnaire, where the four components of the school effectiveness definition did not keep to the same order. There is a radical paradigm shift in the perception of the orientation of school effectiveness from an ethical and patriotic vision – as in the questionnaire – to an academic and instructional one – as in the interviews. Polling the results of the two investigation instruments, most of the school principals’ perceptions of the nature of school effectiveness were not consistent. In other words, though the interviews yielded rich information, they failed to all intents and purposes to ‘put flesh on the bones of questionnaire responses’ (Bell, 2014: 178). To account for such a divergence of perceptions in the results from each research instruments’ results, a possibility of bias might be engendered by the following factors or effects.

8.3.3.1 The interviewer style

This consists in using a direct or indirect interpersonal rather than a professional style of interviewing. Henson et al (1976) point out that interviewer style, particularly the use of rapport, has long been considered an important variable in the interview process. Emphasis and the tone of the interviewer’s voice might direct the interviewee’s attention to certain options and specific concerns.

8.3.3.2 Response effects

In one-on-one interviews governed by open communication and body language, the interviewee might manage to please the interviewer and share the same answers. Reciprocal cooperation and mutual influence might occur within an interview. Houtkoop-Steenstra (2000: viii) makes it clear that ‘Interview talk heavily relies on the practices and principles of ordinary conversation’ and that conversation analysis could be an adequate approach to best understand these practices. On the other hand, Henson (1976) makes it

clear that rapport may reduce distance and hostility, but it may also make the respondent more biased in the direction of compatibility with the interviewer's sentiments. Positive reactions to the interviewer's positive feedback and prompts might also have an impact on the nature of the interviewee's responses.

8.3.3.3 Physical organisation of the interview

The degree of the interview's formality or informality depends upon the physical seat arrangement that is the positioning of both participants. Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003: 53) claim that 'The physical organization of the interview setting is an important aspect of the interview process. Very formal interview situations tend to position the interviewer in front of the interviewee – often with a desk between them. However, this approach can appear confrontational and may intimidate the interviewee. Less formal seating arrangements in interview situations tend to put both parties at ease.

8.4 Part Three: Effective School Characteristics

Part B, Question 2 of the questionnaire was intended to dig deeper into the professional role and demands of the school principals, and unpack their perceptions regarding various facets of school life related to the institution, the academic teaching-learning practices, the students' profiles and the connection between school and parents, as well as the community. What might be striking concerning question 2 is that, though there is a wide array of factors related to each of these facets, the interviewees showed slight disagreement with the order of these factors as displayed in the questionnaire. When informed with that ascending and descending order of importance as it appeared in the questionnaire, the same principals did not keep to the same options during the interviews, showing objections and non-conformity to the already stated responses. The opportunity to reflect in depth within the discussion in the interview enabled the principals to explore the complexities of the issue, whereas; the questionnaire did not allow them this opportunity. The following five sub-sections will discuss the factors of school effectiveness of secondary schools in Abu Dhabi related to inherent school factors, instructional factors, student factors, school-home relationship and local community factors.

8.4.1 School Factors

Looking closely at the items within this category, stakeholders ranked the items 1 (*there is a clear vision for the school*), 12 (*the school conforms to UAE heritage and culture*) and 14 (*there is a good relationship between staff and students*) much higher than the others on the list, with a priority for a school vision based on conformity to the UAE macro context of heritage and culture, alongside a positive relationship between the school stakeholders; namely, the staff and the students. Elements of the school micro context were ranked lower, and relegated to the last three positions. Excellence reward, an approach to motivate the school staff and champion innovations, along with co-curricular activities and auto-evaluation, to a certain extent, downgraded.

What is really striking is that although the self-evaluation factor represents a salient matrix for school improvement, it was not given due importance by the principals both in the questionnaires and the interviews. Generally speaking, internal evaluation may be viewed in another way, as built in and ongoing, an integral part of the day-to-day life of the school and classroom (MacBeath and McGlynn, 2002). Nevertheless, in the UAE context, the interviewed principals seem to be cautious about such a practice, as there is no auto-evaluation tradition, as well as practical procedures, to put it into practice. As a solution, one of the principals expressed his desire to have an auditing organism in Abu Dhabi that is like OFSTED, which provides inspections of schools by teams of inspectors, and directly reports to schools, parents, and government. Such an organ would assist in the internal and external evaluations of schools towards improvement and reform. Pisonová and Nagyová (2014: 725) consider auto-evaluation as a systematic assembling, sorting and evaluating of data, in order to take decisions which will influence further activities of the officers of educators and the school itself. Practically, internal evaluation helps setting the change guidelines for inspectors, school principals and their subordinates. The Knowledge and Human Development Authority (2014) in the UAE asserts that self-evaluation information provided by each school directly influences the inspection activities and that when the information is efficiently presented, inspections will concentrate more on the validation of the accuracy of schools' own evaluations, in addition to determining each school's priorities for further improvement.

8.4.2 Teaching and Learning Factors

Across the questionnaire, the schools' stakeholders slightly agreed on the teaching and learning factors that are closely linked with school effectiveness as a general policy. However, the recurrent factors of Islamic and Arabic identity, schools' healthy learning climates and engagement, as well as teachers' qualifications were considered as the most indispensable criteria to enhance teaching and improve learning outcomes. Anchoring the students in the context of their national culture and heritage, as well as their Islamic background, is top on the list of the principals' and teachers' agenda priorities. These are sensitive issues in an emerging country that hosts various nationalities and cultures that might jeopardise its Arabic and Islamic identity. Dickson (2012: 208) maintains that 'The need to push for reform in order to bring UAE government schools up to international standards is in a delicate balance with the need to maintain some of the educational traditions of the country'. She adds that with an ever increasing influx of expatriates into the workplace, the interaction of cultures which exists now in government schools as a result of reform, is a new phenomenon, so families, particularly more conservative ones, are ever more vigilant of the possible influences and effects of a mixed working environment.

School climate impacts so much on the teaching and learning process. Freiberg (1999: 10) affirms that 'While climate is mostly an affective or feeling element of learning, it has clear implications for achievement and academic well being'.

8.4.3 Student Factors

One of the contentious issues related to the examination of student factors within the context of school effectiveness is how to implement effective learning and teaching, whereby students attain the desired outcomes. The stakeholders agreed that three factors relevant to the students could contribute to that end: student behaviour, empowering students to reach their maximum potential, and provision of equal learning opportunities for all.

The questionnaires and interviews revealed also that although most stakeholders take it for granted that students are not highly motivated, the teachers seem to deliver quite traditional modes of teaching, and higher order thinking skills are not honed and promoted.

In fact, it is controversial, in the absence of co-constructed learning, reflective practices, cooperative learning, critical thinking and autonomous learning, which teachers would really succeed in enhancing their students' effective learning. Teachers are normally expected to focus less on knowledge acquisition by individuals, and more on knowledge-generation with others. Conversely, as one of the principals clearly put it, there seems to be a focus on regulating and monitoring students' behaviour rather than on effective teaching and learning.

“Of course positive behaviour of students and working hard is considered the best indicators for effective schools. I also believe that providing students with equal learning opportunities as most important for SE. However, student motivation and creative thinking skills are less important for ES, because these characteristics are not stable, and beyond schools' abilities to enhance or develop significantly”

Moose and MacBeath (2004) expressed a critical viewpoint with regard to the students' attitudes towards their schools and society in general. For them, young people feel a need to push the boundaries of their schools and their societies. The more compliant and socially conservative their teachers, parents and leaders are, the less young people themselves are likely to accept those strictures. Students are less ready than their grandparents' generation to simply defer to institutional authority, to accord unconditional respect to elders. They are suspicious of them as 'betters'. They share more common frames of reference with youth in other countries than with adults in their own country. For example, they may demonstrate an affinity with a global designer culture tailor-made for youth and impenetrable to their parents.

On the other hand, provision of equal opportunities for all students to learn invokes the idea of equity, entitlement and democratic learning, where no student is 'left behind'. Equal opportunities mean an equal access to knowledge and success. MacBeath (2004) holds that 'Learning democratically means that within highly diverse groups, more and less privileged, more and less ready to engage, all pupils have an entitlement to the best available knowledge on learning effectiveness—how learning happens and how schools provide for that to happen'. Seiya and Sanches (2014) opine that the idea of justice in education in democratic liberal societies is centered around the principle of equality of opportunities, referring to a plurality of dimensions: access to education,

receiving educational goods, focusing on individual needs, improving learning results and level of qualifications.

8.4.4 School-Home Relationship Factors

Parental involvement is an educational topic that has received growing attention in the last few decades. Research studies within this area grew from a focus on the traditional school-home 'one size fits all' relationship, which is essentially a school-centered approach where parents are not effectively involved in school life, to an efficient parental involvement in the learning of students and school decision making processes. According to the sample of respondents for the present thesis, the most important factors for establishing effective school-home relationships consist of informing parents about their children's progress; involving them in their children's learning, and encouraging them to help in the classroom.

Nevertheless, it was not within the reach of the researcher during the interviews to discuss the range of strategies that are employed to involve parents in school life communication with the school staff and their role in improving the students' outcomes.

Al-Taneiji (2001) found that parental involvement in UAE schools was clustered more around parenting at home, and helping their children with learning at home. Most of the schools try to communicate with parents, but few respond. Finally, few parents attend school activities.

8.4.4.1 Informing parents about their children's progress

School administrations are required to inform parents about their children's progress using notes, reports, bulletins and comments. Teachers can also connect with parents in order to exchange knowledge about the way the students can be monitored and assisted, both at home and at school. This is likely to strengthen the school-home relationship and establish a school climate of respect and collaboration with shared goals and responsibilities (Al-Mahdi, 2010).

8.4.4.2 Involving parents in their children's learning

Hayes (2011; 155) postulates that even if direct forms of school involvement are not visible to school personnel, it is important to remember that parents of adolescents engage

in discussions about school, learning, and future expectations that play a major role in the academic success of adolescents. Feiler et al (2007) assert that parents and teachers know much about different aspects of children's learning, but that their knowledge tends not to be well-shared or built on. Since parents have an intimate knowledge of their children, and teachers have a wealth of knowledge about children's learning at school, parents and teachers have to recognise what each has to offer. Therefore, it is crucial to link home and school so that teachers and parents could collaborate together to improve students' effective learning. Being active members of the school board, taking part in Parent-Teacher Associations, and getting involved in decision-making about the educational services their children receive might be some of the possibilities for parental involvement in students' learning.

8.4.4.3 Encouraging parents to help in the classroom

The interviewed principals were not explicit as to ways of involving parents in the classroom. Nevertheless helping in the classroom might be achieved through volunteering in classrooms, responding to requests sent by teachers to review and sign homework, responding to written communications from teachers, attending school parent-teacher conferences, discussing school activities and family issues, and conveying educational expectations (Hayes, 2011). Being informed about what their children are learning can help parents create a supportive environment for their children's learning at home.

Al-Taneiji (2001) thinks that there are several possible ways of involving parents in classrooms and school activities such as

- Having parents visit the classroom to see the teachers' efforts, and see the different levels of students' achievement
- Providing the classroom with necessary technology.
- Helping in the classroom academically, teaching and giving some of their experience to students, especially if the parents are well educated

8.4.5 Local Community Factors

To build strands of communication between the school and the community, the stakeholders agreed upon two factors ('pupils play an active role in the community' and

‘members of the community play an active role in the school’). In the meantime, they acknowledge that it is not necessary for schools to have a variety of societies and clubs. Additionally, supporting social services is not a major activity for the school.

The local community is, in a real sense, the gateway to the world (Gelsthorpe and West-Burnham, 2003). In fact, our everyday experiences as citizens are shaped in local contexts; the communities, in which we live, work and learn are those within which we enact our citizenship (Moore, 2011: 502). Despite global social economic and political developments, there still remains a need for schools and the local community to establish real bonds of communication and collaboration through partnership, rather than mere public relations.

8.5. Part Four: Effective School Leadership Qualities

Both tools of investigation, the questionnaire and interview, have shown that there is a general overriding consensual agreement upon the qualities of a school leader emerging from the stakeholders’ assessment of the reality of school life in Abu Dhabi, and resuin the wider UAE context. Some slight differences in rating one different quality per group could be noticed. Teachers, for instance, placed emphasis on knowledge, that is, management know-how, whereas parents highlighted school objectives. Regardless of these differences, there are basically three common qualities associated with effective school leadership. These are experience, ethics and management competence factors. Creativity, a debatable quality, was perceived by some principals as a possible additional quality for effective school leadership. Strikingly, creativity was not equated with innovation or with any instructional dimension, but, with the skill of daily routine problem solving.

One of the principals makes it clear that;

“Being creative means being able to manage, and showing high expectations means knowing how to motivate staff and students which are really important”

Another thinks that,

“Principals are in need to be creative every day because they are dealing with wider range of different people, teachers, students, parents and even different tasks. That’s why principals should creative.”

In fact, a school leader is deemed to be creative as long as he/she is able to introduce quick-fix solutions, or sometimes ‘one-size-fits-all solutions’ (Fullan, 2002) for incumbent problems. One of the principals stipulates that,

“Any successful manager should be creative and tries his best to tailor official education policy into applicable practices”.

So, in light of these perceptions, what is the prevailing school leadership style in these schools? What were the indicators of ethical leadership of school principals in Abu Dhabi? What are the factors that might account for such prevalence? And what is the impact of such a style on change and improvement?

In section 4.7, table 2 of chapter four, the researcher outlines the distinctive features of six different leadership styles, mostly cited in the literature, on effective school leadership. The purpose was to measure the stakeholders’ perceptions against the criteria set in table 2, in order to come up with a broad, if not precise, portrayal of the prevailing school leadership style.

Nevertheless, close examination of the data resulting from the questionnaire and the interview makes it possible to outline a prevailing perception that principals’ leadership style tends to be governed by a set of predetermined beliefs, consisting of long experience, competence, morality and ethics. Apparently, although one of the principals alluded to the fact that ‘every leader has his different management style, school conditions and personal experiences and qualification’, these attributes could resonate with an ethical school leadership, as most principals stressed the importance of values and ethics both in interpersonal relations as well as within the fabric of the school climate. One of the principals made it clear that;

“Principals’ ethics occupy the highest priority because he should be a model, especially of fairness, and supportive to staff and students. His experience would definitely assist him to manage school competently and be an effective leader”

Another maintains that;

“Experience and professional ethics are a must for effective leaders. You can not imagine how staff and students would see the principal if he/she does not show an example for them. If that happened, school would be corrupted and no need to talk about effectiveness then”.

Possible intersection with other attributes relevant to managerial and transactional styles could be easily retrieved from the interviews, where principals expressed their standpoints regarding school life and their administrative duties.

Ingredients of other styles are interspersed here and there in the principals’ responses, a fact that could be interpreted as either showing a blurred image of the nature of school leadership in the eyes of the principals, or a tendency within the principals to uphold a congruent ‘eclectic’ approach, based on the integration of additional elements of certain other leadership styles, such as the instructional (students’ outcomes), transactional (task goals, correctness of task, clear targets, standards and rewards) and managerial (highly bureaucratic functions, budgeting and employees’ tasks and behaviors) while keeping to the principles of Islam and the precepts of the local culture. One of the principals admitted that,

“Deep experience in managing schools, dealing with staff and understanding the school community and environment enable school leaders to be more effective”.

Another principal strongly supported the idea that,

“Effective schools can only be managed by leaders of high ethics and deep experience”.

This is what is commonly called the ‘value based leadership paradigm’ where the central point is emphasis on values that cause the success and durability of an organisation. In a study using a quantitative approach directed at teachers in the vocational Sumedang District of Indonesia, Suryana (2010) found that a well-run organisation one capable of sharing common values and norms among its members, and that in the achievement of educational goals, value-based leadership is based on the following tenets

1. The reference values are those which are based upon religious and life tenets.
2. The growing values refer to the ongoing process of defining these fundamental values.
3. These values are either already intrinsic to the general character of the individual, or must be taught by a guide or mentor.
4. These values, once uniformly understood and adopted, must then be applied to the ongoing acquisition of knowledge.
5. The formal institutional values must be exercised without exception by the organisation's management
6. The effectiveness of the organisation will then depend upon how well these values are implemented by the school administration, faculty, and staff.

Figure 8.2 below illustrates the basic value system components of effective school leadership as perceived by the stakeholders in Abu Dhabi.



Figure 8 2 : Basic Components Of Effective School Leadership In Abu Dhabi (by reseacher)

Participative, distributive and transformative leadership styles that empower school staff are not commonplace practices in the targeted schools. This could be partly attributed to the lack of lucidity concerning the principal's roles and responsibilities, in addition to the system imposition, the top-down decision making processing, and the nature and amount of administrative routines principals are facing on a daily basis, in addition to the lack of practical training programs. More awareness-raising and training initiatives should be undertaken to align the principals' current practices to the general philosophy of ADEC's vision and orientations.

Davis et al. (2005 cited in Hourania & Stringer, 2014) stipulate that, in practice, few principals act as instructional leaders, due to the fact that their days are filled with activities such as management, scheduling, reporting, handling relations with parents and the community, and dealing with the multiple crises and situations that are inevitable in schools. Relatively little time is spent in classrooms, and even less time is allotted for analysing instructional strategies with teachers.

Botes' (2012) study of the leadership profile of two principals in Abu Dhabi concurs with the findings of our thesis. Whereas ADEC expects school principal leadership to provide 'a stimulating educational environment' by motivating staff, recognizing their efforts and celebrating their successes, principals' agendas consist of managing daily school life, and monitoring the behaviour of the school parties. As such, Botes (2012) makes it clear that principals do not perceive their role in leading teaching and learning, which is a major expectation of reform from both policy makers and teaching staff. Principals seem oblivious to the stressful need of their role to influence this area.

Litz (2014) attempted to investigate teachers' and principals' overall acceptance of transformational leadership, and the degree to which school principals in the UAE practice this type of leadership to bring about change and innovation. 27 principals and 103 teachers, mostly from Abu Dhabi and Dubai, took part in the study. Based on a quantitative survey and qualitative semi-structured interviews, the results were:

- Current leadership is not being received positively by principals' subordinates.
- Some components of transformational leadership may be already practiced in the UAE
- Leadership style is not yet a fully known practice in the UAE
- Strengthening the culture of transformational leadership is still needed
- Transformational leadership can be applicable in the UAE, given that certain modifications are made to take the culture into consideration.
- Transactional leadership appears still to be practiced, and can be gradually integrated with the practice of transformational leadership, with the goal of eventually making transformational leadership the more dominant style of leadership.

- Professional development and seminars that focus on transformational leadership might also be useful in institutionalising the leadership style in the UAE school system
- Additional graduate coursework that concentrates on the analysis of comparative leadership approaches, as well as attitudes towards transplanted Western leadership models, may be warranted in education faculties
- Given that there are a number of important differences between transactional and transformational leadership styles, the ability to either develop a more transformational style or to successfully combine the two management styles seems imperative. Transformational leadership engenders change in the organisation, while transactional leadership emphasises each step of a work process.

Using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) by Avolio and Bass (1995), Ibrahim and Al-Taneiji (2013: 46) deduced from data collected from teachers in 34 government schools that ‘the transformational leadership style was the most practiced style by school principals. The second in rank is the transactional style of leadership, and last is the passive or avoidant style’. Consequently, as building on transformational leadership alone will not create the necessary influence to improve student achievement; they suggest that it should be combined with instructional leadership. The problem with this study is that the respondents were provided with limited items relevant to three unique predominant leadership styles, upon which Avolio and Bass forged their questionnaire. The researchers picked up the first 36 questions of the MLQ, where items were divided into three major scales: transformational (20 items), transactional (8 items), and passive leadership (8 items) (Avolio & Bass, 1995). Had the population of this study been provided with extra items relevant to other various leadership styles, the findings might presumably have generated different results.

In a study of the leadership styles of school principals in Thailand, Kanokorn (2013: 2087) found that factor analysis of the questionnaire data, collected with the Likert scale, resulted in an ethical model of five primary factors and 19 secondary factors. The five primary factors were responsibility, fairness, trust, disposition, and empowerment. As an example, the responsibility factor consisted of three secondary factors, which were accountability, pursuit of excellence and self- control. Under responsibility, the best three indicators were:

concern for teamwork and school outcomes; satisfaction and pride in the current state; and persistence in improving quality of work.

In a study centered around the perceptions of two school principals about school leadership, Botes (2012: 54) remarked that PB (a nickname for school principal 2) ‘seems trapped in new responsibilities of developing and executing reform agenda while lacking confidence in her abilities to fulfill the expectations of reform’. As she was not willing to adjust her mindset to accept change or understand the vision of reform, Botes (2012) noticed that PB was dissatisfied with ongoing reform and change, and was strongly attached to a three-dimensional leadership style: managerial leadership practices, transactional skills which manifest in reward/discipline practices, and a focus on the moral appropriateness of Western staff behaviours.

In another study conducted by Hourani and Stringer (2014), analysis of interviews with 16 Emirati native Arabic speaking principals employed in Abu Dhabi public schools revealed areas of improvements to content, falling into the category of knowledge advancement. These areas were presented according to the following six standards:

1. Leading Strategically, involves vision and goal construction,
2. Leading change and school planning
3. Leading Teaching and Learning, knowing the scope of the curriculum to meet the needs of second-language learners
4. Leading the People, involves identifying elements of continuing learning, conflict management and distributed leadership, in addition to proactive knowledge required as to how to create opportunities for continuous and lifelong learning within the school community, and more specifically, for parents
5. Leading the Organisation: build school archival systems to store and retrieve documentary evidence on teacher performance, student achievement, policies and procedures and organisational roles, in addition to the need for more training on budgeting and procurement of school funds
6. Leading the Community: necessity to learn more about parental involvement and pathways of sharing school-related matters with the community.

In the context of the present thesis, a holistic multi-level ethical moral leadership style emerged from the study of the school parties’ responses, which might be qualified as a

trade-off between three types of leadership styles, the moral, transactional and managerial styles that are goal-oriented, with a focus on administrative daily routines. In fact, further research is needed within this area, to account for the predominance of styles other than these.

So to what extent did the principals in Abu Dhabi embrace change and reform? Isn't there any resistance? And if so, how could research account for this? Such issues will be attended to in the subsequent section.

8.6. Part Five: Issues Associated With Change Management

Change and reform within schools is multidimensional, as it touches on the school vision, leadership management style, the school climate and parental involvement, as well as relations with the local community. The ultimate goal is to improve students' outcomes. Fig 8.3 below displays the cycle of change that normally starts with an evaluation of the status quo at the beginning of the process, and again at the end, forming a complete development cycle (Newton and Tarrant, 1992). The four questions in the figure represent the rationale for a constructive change, both on the level of school effectiveness and leadership effectiveness. The question is whether the targeted stakeholders in the present thesis have really undertaken change within their schools in such a systematic way. In other words, have the principals undertaken auto-evaluation at the beginning and at the end of any planned educational action? What prerequisites for change have they ever thought of to secure the achievement of their retraced goals?

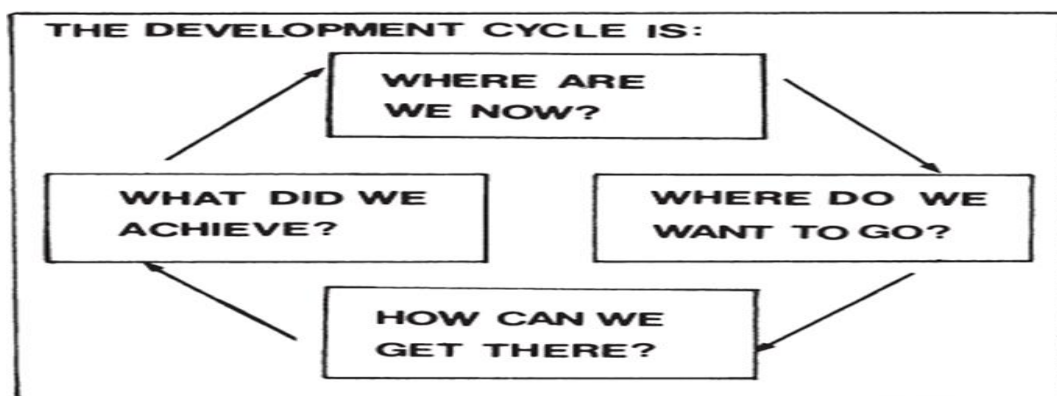


Figure 8 3 Development Cycle (Newton and Tarrant, 1992: 34)

8.6.1 Improving school effectiveness

The stakeholders' perceptions delineated from the questionnaires and the interviews almost all of which had a consensus on the strategies for improving the schools. School improvement in Abu Dhabi depends on three strategies; vision, teamwork and school climate. Each of these factors had the highest mean score. In other words, there seems to be a consensus across the groups that to initiate change and implement school improvement, an effective school needs to set clear goals, a collaborative management approach and an integrated healthy, collegiate and supportive climate. Induction leadership programmes, internal self-evaluation and external evaluation are not considered by the majority of principals and their subordinates as majorly efficient strategies for improving schools. The reason might be the lack of logistic procedures and evaluation organisms for schools to internally gauge their degree of effectiveness against clear standards, indicators and benchmarks to be externally appraised. Another reason might be that auto-evaluation is not a top priority, as one of the principals openly stated,

“Measuring success can be delayed for a while, let's focus on work, process, and goals before we go deep into evaluations”.

However, this does not exclude the fact that external evaluation might be a practice that is not warmly welcomed by certain school leaders.

“Why should government to interfere in everything? Let schools bear the responsibility of their achievement”.

Another principal expressed a cynical standpoint regarding external validation, saying that,

“They [our school leaders] also have negative attitudes towards standardisation process or external interference in evaluating progress”.

8.6.1.1 Vision

To improve school effectiveness, schools should have a clear and ambitious long-term vision, shared by the leader and the subordinates to pursue change. Articulating a vision strikes a chord with the school parties, promotes a climate of optimism, enthusiasm and engagement towards achieving the ultimate goals and the shared change processes. A clear

vision gives impetus to the change process as it secures change feasibility. Newton and Tarrant (1992: 81) admit that ‘Visionary objectives are often looked upon initially as too theoretical, unattainable or abstract, yet they have led individuals and organisations to some remarkable accomplishments’. In other words the articulation of high-level objectives is a prerequisite for reaching high standards.

By definition, ‘a vision should be something very special, around which myths and rituals can be constructed’ (Newton and Tarrant (1992: 81). If improvement and innovation are necessary, then it is imperative to set out appropriate objectives by identifying strengths and weaknesses, and leaving room for proactive plans and strategies to develop in a supportive work environment, promoting an academic learning climate. Joint efforts by school staff added to a distributive and visionary leadership style might make the vision come true. Creemers and Reezigt (1999: 127) hold that ‘a vision on education does not only hold goals but means as well. A vision on education does not only describe what education is for and what it should achieve, but it also describes the way in which goals are to be achieved’.

8.6.1.2 Teamwork

The respondents to the questionnaire and the interviewees in this thesis combined school vision and climate with the school parties’ teamwork to manage change and improve performance. This means that, the stakeholders’ perception of change involves both institutional and human factors.

In response to increasing concerns about sustaining educational reform and improving student achievement, drastic changes have occurred within the realm of organisational dynamics, where school management has shifted considerably from highly structured leadership practice, characterised by a hierarchical or ‘focused leadership’ to shared or distributed leadership, and even a ‘bossless team’ or a ‘self-managed team’(Barry 1991).

West et al (2005: 74) posit that ‘Teamwork is a process aimed at facilitating team member interactions through effective communication, coordination, and cooperation in an effort to promote successful task completion and to develop high-quality relationships among team members’.

Parker (2008: xiii) maintains that ‘effective teamwork is critical for success. And teamwork starts with team players - individuals working together to accomplish agreed - upon goals and objectives’.

Effective teamwork presupposes an action plan, comfortable and relaxed climate, open communication and mutual trust, in addition to clear roles and work assignments, shared leadership and self-assessment.

8.6.1.3 School climate

The school climate is one of the key concepts in the literature on school effectiveness. It is generally associated with positive student outcomes and reduced discipline problems. This is the reason why ‘school climate is often a target of school improvement initiatives and programs aiming to promote positive outcomes for students and staff’ (Mitchell, 2010).

School climate refers to the quality and character of school life. It reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices, and organisational structures (Cohen, 2010: 100). School climate impacts on all aspects of school management, but mainly on four major areas

- Safety (physical; social-emotional)
- Relationships (respect for diversity; morale, connectedness; community-collaboration)
- Teaching and Learning (support for learning; social, emotional, and ethical curricular offerings; leadership; professional development), and
- The Environment (Quality and Structure).

Given the association between school climate and positive student outcomes, such as improved academic achievement and reduced discipline problems,⁴⁻⁵ school climate is often a target of school improvement initiatives and programs aiming to promote positive outcomes for students and staff. -Feeling socially, emotionally, and physically safe, school stakeholders can collaborate together to achieve the school vision and improve performance on the level of the students’ outcomes (Gulsen & Gulenay, 2014).

In a study conducted within 71 high schools with 2666 teachers, Brault et al (2014: 157) indicated that teacher perceptions of the capacity of their students to learn was not only

determined by structural indicators of academic composition, but also determined by a collective perception of what school engagement and achievement (educational climate) was, and could be expected of students.

Further research needs to address the types of school climate in Abu Dhabi schools, the interrelationships of the school staff, the shared values and norms and the degree of openness of the school. Deeper research needs also to investigate the impact of the school climate on students' attainments, teachers' job satisfaction, and the degree of parental involvement.

Fig 8.4 represents the three concepts highlighted by the stakeholders in Abu Dhabi schools and discussed so far, representing the conceptual framework for initiating and improving school effectiveness.

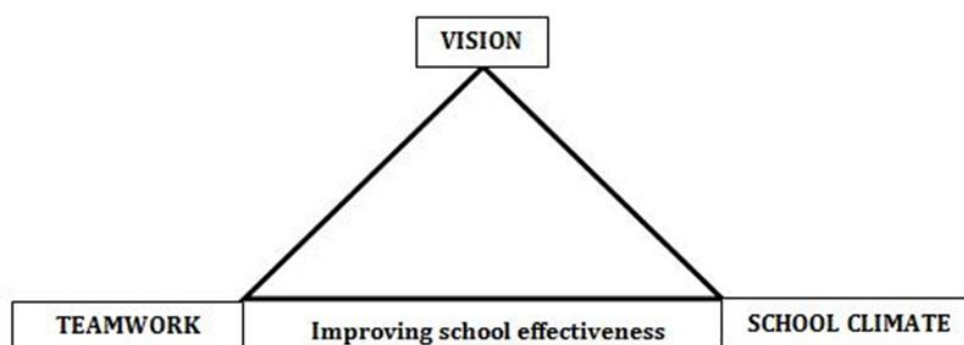


Figure 8 4 Components of improving school effectiveness (by author)

8.6.2 Strategies for improving school leadership

Both the questionnaires and the interviews did not reveal clear perceptions on how to develop school leadership. It is clear that most of the principals in this study did not prioritise certain actions and decisions, and their assessment of their status, needs and improvement requirements differs from one principal to another, and varies according to the context of each school. One of the principals affirmed that,

“Every leader has his different management style, school conditions and personal experiences and qualification”

The factors proposed in the questionnaire, and then discussed by the stakeholders during the interview sessions, were centered around qualifications, training, professional development and other transactional issues, mainly school daily life routines. These factors touch upon different styles of leadership, and were intended to delineate common tendencies and trends among the school principals in Abu Dhabi regarding the future prospects of improvement. As most of the options presented in the questionnaire were treated by the respondents on relatively equal footing of importance, and ranked nearly within the same spectrum of school leadership essential criteria for improvement, it could be said that the principals took these factors with a high degree of precaution, that might even verge on resistance. Carnall (2007: 3) equates resistance to change with resistance to uncertainty. He maintains that ‘It may be possible to see change as demanding and tiring but not as necessarily inherently difficult. This argument partly turns on the idea of ‘resistance to change’. Some argue that people are inherently resistant to change’.

In fact, most of the principals refused being coached or mentored by another colleague, as it, are institutionally, morally and socially a ‘sensitive’ issue, the principals regarding it as a potentially face-threatening practice, as it has an impact on their self-esteem. One of the principals claims that,

“You may never find a school leader in the UAE schools to have positive attitudes towards being trained by another leader, because this issue is sensitive and implies a negative message for trainees”.

Nevertheless, two ways in which school leadership can be developed were to a certain degree approved and epitomised by the principals and teachers. ‘Attending regular discussions with other school leaders on leadership issues’, and ‘working with teachers on issues of school improvement’ were thought to be likely to advance the improvement process. ‘Undertaking a Master’s degree in educational leadership’ and ‘Being mentored by an experienced principal’ were not given equal importance. Research-based practices, attending training courses; knowledge and curriculum management are not, apparently, appealing. The school principals’ first primary point of concern is yearning for stable professional and social status. Job security is seemingly a major concern. Opportunities for self-development and self-actualisation might be relegated to second place.

These findings on the factors allowing leadership improvement prospects corroborate the previous discussion on school leadership styles, characterised primarily by a preponderant tendency to a managerial and transactional style, with a weak inclination towards instructional, distributive and transformational models.

To be able to compete globally, and to be anchored in the process of change and reform, Litz (2014) suggests that school leaders in the UAE have to adopt a transformational leadership style that encourages risk taking or ownership of situations (entrepreneurship), and building infrastructure, instead of concentrating on the individual bricks and mortar of the structure (transactional leadership).

8.7 Recommendations

This thesis brings the results of my research to the attention of those who, in one way or another, are interested in what happens in the fields of educational effectiveness in general, and in the areas of school and leadership effectiveness in particular. Policy makers in Abu Dhabi and in the United Arab Emirates may take account of the findings presented herein, and integrate them into a constructive restructuring and reform refinement of the educational system. Though this thesis is not written as a prescriptive or instructional manual, school stakeholders may find it useful to improve school leadership and management, the general school climate; parental involvement and students' achievements. While some insights can be used to overhaul current practices in Abu Dhabi, other insights might open up the possibility for broader research that would rationalise movements of change and reform.

In accordance with the findings and results gathered, it is possible to put forth the following recommendations.

In terms of content and process, professional development programs for principals have to be undertaken according to school leaders' needs analysis, and based, to a certain extent, on their perceptions. This might be a possible way of installing a bottom-up approach to change and improvement that might encompass the following components:

- Alleviating the managerial bureaucratic tasks of the school leaders, and allowing them to experiment with alternative instructional and transformational leadership styles, with a focus on teachers continuing professional development and students' outcomes.

- Strengthening the professional bond between the school leaders and enabling the principals to develop positive attitudes regarding mentoring, coaching and counseling. A possible excellence reward program can be set forth to choose, for example, 'the principal of the year'.
- Designing specific curricula addressing Islamic values and qualities of good citizenship or co-curricular activities in collaboration with associations and communities, focusing on the preservation of the UAE's culture and heritage. Fostering parent involvement and partnership with civil societies and associations could be a possibility for disseminating good spiritual, moral and civic values.
- Encouraging an ecological governance of schools with a participative and distributive leadership paradigm where teachers, students and parents are practically involved in setting the vision of the school, carrying out internal auto-evaluation and partaking in sustaining school improvement
- Decentralising the educational system and encouraging principals to pair, share and exchange experiences. Inter-principal workshops can be conducted for a twofold purpose. First; empowering the principals in the process of change, and secondly, involving them in a socio-constructive interaction prior to any decision-making action.
- Enabling principals to implement auto-evaluations and self-monitoring evaluation strategies using standardised checklists and criteria across the secondary schools, or checklists elaborated jointly by the school staff and in consultation with the students and parents.
- Creating an institutional body like OFSTED, as one principal suggested, that is likely to monitor and assess school and leadership effectiveness, publish regular and annual reports about the schools' progress and other aspects of school life; and administer a pre-service induction training for recruited principals, and continuing professional development programmes for in-service principals.
- As reform efforts are underway, fostering sponsored field research centered round school and leadership effectiveness through corporate research and case studies could help realign the current practices and calibrate the system. Thorne (2011: 182) acknowledges that 'Any

educational system which is attempting to transform itself in the way that the Emirati, more specifically the Abu Dhabi system, is attempting to do, must additionally set in place a research base in order to evaluate current practices and inform future policy changes'. Creswell (2012: 4) claims that, 'Armed with research results, teachers and other educators become more effective professionals. This effectiveness translates into better learning for kids'.

- Encouraging research on school effectiveness in the United Arab Emirates to address issues relevant to the systematic strategies and practical procedures that could be formally and informally employed to involve parents in their children's school life, and engage them as partners in their education and learning at home, in the community and at school.

- Setting out a school policy framework to involve the four types of stakeholders in the process of reform and change, as well as the construction and evaluation of the school plans. Within this perspective, the researcher recommends a shared leadership style that emanates from a distributed vision and a bottom-up approach, rather than a vertical and hierarchical one, where the stakeholders' various standpoints and contributions might be jointly considered to construct and elucidate the school vision. Within this context, Sergiovanni (2001: 33) asserts that 'All theories of leadership emphasize connecting people to each other and to their work. These connections satisfy the needs for coordination and commitment that any enterprise must meet to be successful'.

However, it is noteworthy that, given the scarcity of research addressing effective learning and teaching qualities in Abu Dhabi, and in the UAE in general, there needs to be an in-depth investigation of the language policy, the curricula, the teacher training programmes, teaching practices and students' attainment in situ, to help align the reform movement to international standards.

8.8 Conclusion

The researcher attempted to reform the conceptual frameworks in relation with the definition of school effectiveness as perceived in the context of the stakeholders in Abu Dhabi, with a review of the prevailing leadership style and perquisites for proactive prospects of change and reform. It is recommended that these facts have to be taken into account in any further reform initiatives.

It is noteworthy that, in the minds of the stakeholders, certain aspects occur continuously, in that the stakeholders involved in this thesis seemed to focus too much on patterns of Islamic and Arabic culture, values and principles, in addition to promoting citizenship. This patriotic vision, combined with an ethical and moral philosophy of school management, underpins the definition of school effectiveness, the qualities of school leadership and the general tendencies of change and reform.

In sum, the thesis reveals the existence of three general tendencies and overall trends that govern school stakeholders' perceptions regarding effective schools, effective leadership and improvement prospects:

1. **Professional status:** It is clear that the principals and teachers in particular insisted on the factors of experience, competence, qualification and commitment. Certification, assertively, self-esteem and self-efficacy are thus indispensable for schools' stances to handle school management and school improvement.
2. **Ethical inclination:** the stakeholders valorised Islamic and Arabic values, as well as moral principles, to regulate their students' behavior, and strengthen the reciprocal relationships or 'school connectedness' within the secondary schools.
3. **Perception of change:** a clear-cut vision, visionary teamwork, in addition to a healthy interpersonal and instructional school climate, is the pillars of any improvement enterprise.

Pooled together, these three basic layers need to be incorporated as the bottom lines of any decision making process on the part of higher educational institutions in Abu Dhabi.

8.9 Limitations of the Study

Although it has covered large areas of school and leadership effectiveness, one major limitation to this study is the fact that it was carried out only in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. It would be interesting to know whether the findings from this study would be similar if conducted in the other emirates. In fact, the current study is limited to 30 secondary schools within only one out of six emirates. As such, it might be misleading to overgeneralise the findings. A broader investigation of the perceptions of schools' stakeholders across the rest of the country could reveal additional congruent or incongruent

data, and deeper understanding of the stakeholders' perceptions in relation to the issues tackled in the thesis. Equally, although the research has, in some ways, allowed the development of arguments for change to meet the needs of the MOE in the UAE and ADEC in particular, unilateral small-scale investigations of each category of stakeholders on their own might also generate deeper insights into their perceptions and concerns.

Yet, although the population of the study might appear to be limited in terms of the sample surveys and interviewees, it was beyond the reach of the researcher to involve all the school subordinates within the emirate of Abu Dhabi. Sampling is likely to give an idea of the general tendencies. The study could have had much more impact on reform initiatives within the UAE had it had embarked on longitudinal cohort field observations of the principals', teachers', parents' and students' behavior, and handling of daily school life in situ over a certain time span . Such an enterprise certainly has its own cost and time effects, and would presumably be too demanding, but corporate research teams could be a feasible procedure to overcome such problems.

8.10 Possible Areas for Future Research

The thesis' findings should be assessed from two perspectives. First, the key informants were from one region only, the Emirate of Abu Dhabi; and second, there must be further scrutiny of the elements of local culture and religious faith, and their impact on instructional effectiveness, in general.

In light of the findings of the study, the researcher recommends a calibration of the change and improvement plans conducted by the MOE and ADEC, in particular with the perceptions of the schools' stakeholders previously outlined. Enough research studies have to investigate the need for the reinforcement of ethical, spiritual and national patriotic values within the instructional curricula and training, as well as the continuing professional development programs designed for the principals and teachers. As the findings of the present thesis are intended to stimulate further research interest in the school and leadership effectiveness landscape across the United Arab Emirates, one possible area of research could be exploration of the managerial and instructional strategies that are likely to involve the effect(s) of Islamic principles and cultural heritage of the UAE into the effectiveness of schools and leadership policies, orientations, and external and internal evaluation of the schools.

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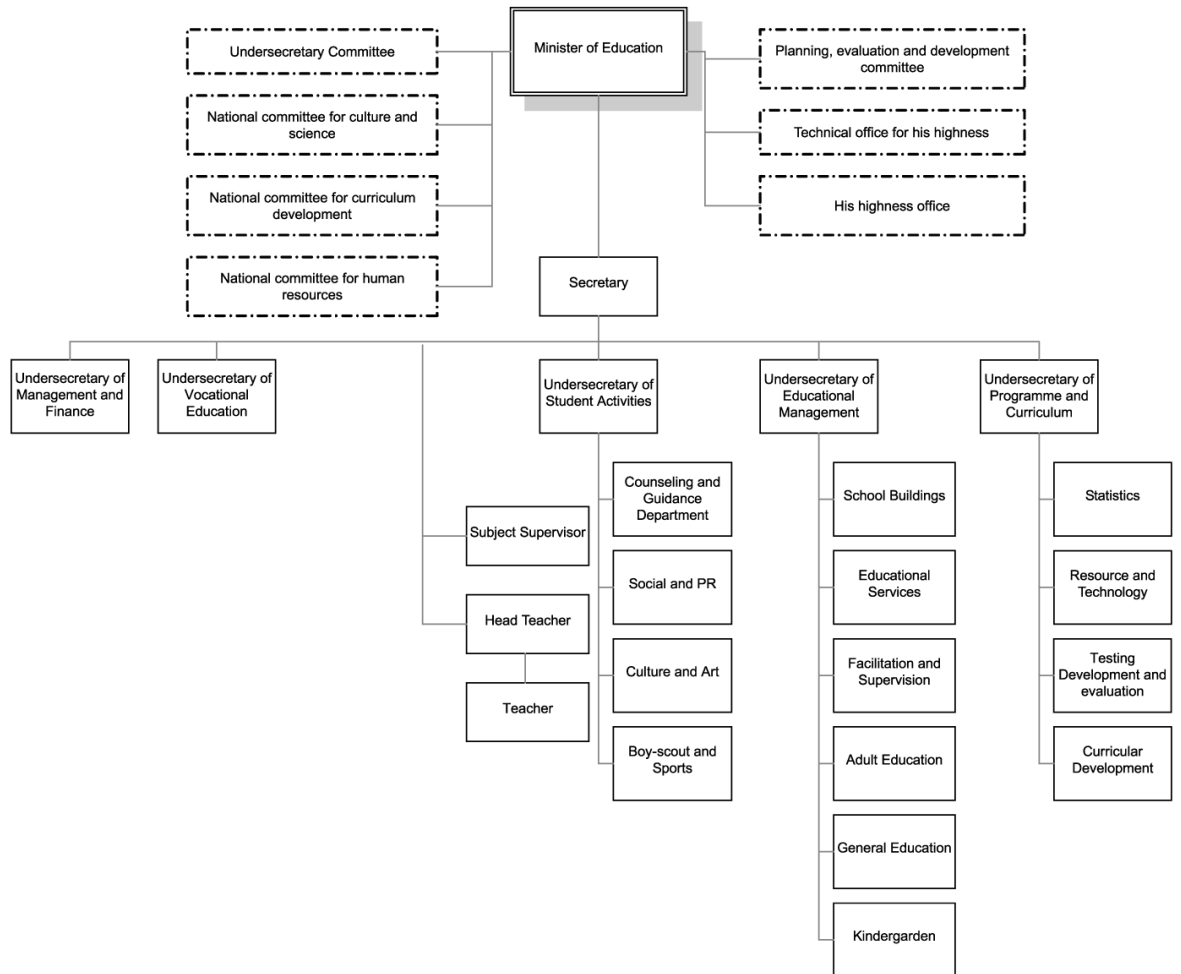
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Organisational Structure Of Ministry Of Education



Appendix B: Current Trends On Effective Schools Characteristics

Effective school domains (ESDs) & Sub-Domains		Effective School Characteristics by reseacher		
		Kirk and Jones, 2004	Rutter <i>et al.</i> (1979)	The Department of Education and Science (1988)
SCHOOL FACTORS	Vision & Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear school mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School ethos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear aims and objectives
	Academic expectations & standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High expectations for success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High teacher expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An emphasis on high academic standards
	Curriculum & resources			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well-planned curriculum • Effectively deployed resources
	Assessment & feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent monitoring of student progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback and treatment of students 	
	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe and orderly environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective classroom management • Good working conditions for staff and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relevant orderly and firm classroom atmosphere • Suitable and stimulating physical environments
LEADERSHIP FACTORS	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional leadership 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good leadership by senior and middle managers • The capability to identify and solve problems and to manage change and development
TEACHING & LEARNING FACTORS	Teaching		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers as positive role models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well qualified staff who possessed effective subject and pedagogical knowledge
	Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to learn and time on task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared staff-student activities 	
STUDENT FACTORS			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students given responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive relationships with students, encouraging them to express their view
SCHOOL-HOME FACTORS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive home-school relations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive relationships with the community, • Concern for students' overall well-being, with effective pastoral systems
LOCAL COMMUNITY FACTORS				

Effective school domains (ESDs) & Sub-Domains		Effective School Characteristics by researcher		
		Smith and Tomlinson (1990)	Mortimore <i>et al.</i> 's (1988), Mortimore (1991), Alexander <i>et al.</i> 's (1992), and Sammons (1994)	The Institute of Public Policy Research (Brighouse and Tomlinson, 1991: 5)
SCHOOL FACTORS	Vision & Mission			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Uplifting ethos</i>
	Academic expectations & standards			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>High expectations</i>
	Curriculum & resources			
	Assessment & feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positive feedback and treatment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Collective self-review</i>
	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • climate of respect between all participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a work-centred environment; • a positive climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environment:</i> visually and aurally positive, promoting positive behaviour,
LEADERSHIP FACTORS	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective leadership and management by senior and middle managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purposeful leadership by the head teacher (principal); • the involvement of the deputy head teacher (vice-principal); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Leadership at all levels:</i> strong, purposeful, adoption of more than one style • <i>Management and organisation:</i> clear, simple, flatter structures
TEACHING & LEARNING FACTORS	Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teacher involvement in decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involvement of teachers • consistency amongst teachers • structured teaching sessions • intellectually challenging teaching • limited focus in teaching sessions • increased whole class interactive teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff development:</i> systematic and involving collective and individual needs • <i>Teaching and learning:</i> creative debate amongst teachers and curricula and pedagogy
	Learning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximum communication between teachers and students 	
STUDENT FACTORS				
SCHOOL-HOME FACTORS			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parental involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Parental involvement:</i> parents as partners in education
LOCAL COMMUNITY FACTORS				

Scope of ES Characteristics		Effective School Characteristics by researcher		
		Hopkins <i>et al.</i> (1995)	Australia source (http://www.hi.is/~joner/eaps/cs_effs.htm)	(McGaw <i>et al.</i> 1992): 6
SCHOOL FACTORS	Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>collaborative planning</i> 		
	Academic expectations & standards			
	Curriculum & resources		Curriculum that fosters an 'instructional emphasis' or an 'academic press'	
	Assessment & feedback		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pupil progress measurement system that is geared more to the next lesson's teaching than the next grade promotion 	
	Environment		An organisational climate that supports good work by teachers	
LEADERSHIP FACTORS	Leadership		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong leadership at the building level 	
TEACHING & LEARNING FACTORS	Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>enquiry and reflection by staff</i> <i>staff development</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practice' teaching 	
	Learning			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> positive relationship with learning the development of appropriate value systems the preparation of the student for the next stage of learning
STUDENT FACTORS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>involvement of students</i> (at all stages of the process of development) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'development of a positive self-concept sense of self-discipline and self-worth students' living skills – becoming a productive and confident member of the adult world
SCHOOL-HOME FACTORS				
LOCAL COMMUNITY FACTORS				

Appendix B1

Descriptive statistics of teachers' responses to school factors (No. 136)

#	SCHOOL FACTORS	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	There is a clear vision ...	47	35%	68	50%	21	15%	0	0%	0	0%	4.14	0.89
2	Teachers know what they	60	44%	60	44%	16	12%	0	0%	0	0%	4.37	0.93
3	Staff are committed	67	49%	55	40%	4	3%	10	7%	0	0%	4.34	1.02
4	The curriculum is appropriate	50	37%	56	41%	25	18%	5	4%	0	0%	4.26	0.86
5	There is an effective discipline policy	77	57%	54	40%	0	0%	5	4%	0	0%	4.41	0.907
6	The school has a clear plan	64	47%	52	38%	20	15%	0	0%	0	0%	4.36	0.88
7	Teachers obtain good	64	47%	53	39%	19	14%	0	0%	0	0%	4.2	0.94
8	The school is accountable to parents and families	69	51%	58	43%	4	3%	0	0%	5	4%	4.4	0.93
9	Excellence is rewarded	50	37%	45	33%	26	19%	10	7%	5	4%	4.03	1.06
10	The school offers co-curricular	44	32%	58	43%	24	18%	10	7%	0	0%	4.14	0.95
11	Teachers use professional development	54	40%	51	38%	26	19%	0	0%	5	4%	4.32	0.95
12	The school conforms to UAE heritage and culture	58	43%	63	46%	10	7%	0	0%	5	4%	4.37	0.94
13	School buildings and resources are used well	69	51%	55	40%	12	9%	0	0%	0	0%	4.42	0.845
14	There is a good relationship	55	40%	61	45%	15	11%	5	4%	0	0%	4.39	0.89
15	The school evaluates its progress	55	40%	50	37%	27	20%	4	3%	0	0%	4.26	1
16	Counseling services are provided	50	37%	50	37%	24	18%	12	9%	0	0%	4.12	0.98
	Average	57.4	42%	56	41%	18	13%	4	3%	1	1%	4.28	0.95

Appendix B2

Descriptive statistics of principals' responses to school factors (No. 46)

#	SCHOOL FACTORS	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	There is a clear vision for the school	0	0%	46	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.4	0.5
2	Teachers know what they are supposed	21	46%	25	54%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.5	0.6
3	Staff are committed	21	46%	25	54%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.5	0.8

#	SCHOOL FACTORS	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
4	The curriculum is appropriate	0	0%	46	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.5	0.6
5	There is an effective discipline policy	21	46%	25	54%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.6	0.7
6	The school has a clear plan	25	54%	21	46%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.7	0.5
7	Teachers obtain good support from	21	46%	25	54%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.6	0.5
8	The school is accountable to	21	46%	25	54%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.5	0.6
9	Excellence is rewarded	0	0%	46	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.0	0.7
10	The school offers co-curricular ...	0	0%	46	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.5	0.6
11	Teachers use professional development	25	54%	21	46%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.7	0.5
12	The school conforms to UAE heritage and culture	0	0%	46	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.5	0
13	School buildings and resources ...	0	0%	46	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.0	0
14	There is a good relationship ...	21	46%	25	54%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.6	0.5
15	The school evaluates ...	0	0%	46	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.6	0.6
16	Counseling services....	21	46%	25	54%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.5	0.7
	Average	12	26%	34	74%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.5	0.6

Appendix B3

Descriptive statistics of students' responses to school factors (No. 142)

#	SCHOOL FACTORS	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	There is a clear vision for the school	75	53%	62	44%	0	0%	5	4%	0	0%	4.36	0.49
2	Teachers know what they ...	67	47%	75	53%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.15	1.01
3	Staff are committed	71	50%	71	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.08	1.11
4	The curriculum is appropriate	50	35%	82	58%	10	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.26	0.965
5	There is an effective ..	54	38%	78	55%	10	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.14	0.98
6	The school has a clear plan ...	63	44%	79	56%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.4	0.6
7	Teachers obtain good support ...	72	51%	60	42%	10	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.16	0.95

#	SCHOOL FACTORS	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
8	The school is accountable ..	60	42%	78	55%	4	3%	0	0%	0	0%	3.93	1
9	Excellence is rewarded	61	43%	61	43%	20	14%	0	0%	0	0%	4.06	1.08
10	The school offers co-curricular ...	56	39%	66	46%	20	14%	0	0%	0	0%	3.87	1.1
11	Teachers use professional ...	57	40%	85	60%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.35	0.48
12	The school conforms to heritage ...	85	60%	57	40%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.46	0.68
13	School buildings and resources ...	72	51%	60	42%	10	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.4	0.49
14	There is a good relationship between ...	76	54%	66	46%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.18	1.01
15	The school evaluates ...	51	36%	71	50%	20	##	0	0%	0	0%	3.75	1.01
16	Counseling services ...	64	45%	58	41%	10	7%	10	7%	0	0%	4.15	1.04
	Average	70	49%	62	44%	8	6%	2	1%	0	0%	4.02	1.02

Appendix B4

Descriptive statistics of parents' responses to school factors (No. 138)

#	SCHOOL FACTORS	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	There is a clear vision for the	65	47%	68	49%	0	0%	5	4%	0	0%	4.57	0.5
2	Teachers know what they are	64	46%	74	54%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.14	0.96
3	Staff are committed	60	43%	78	57%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.17	0.98
4	The curriculum is appropriate	60	43%	68	49%	10	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.43	0.5
5	There is an effective ..	52	38%	76	55%	10	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.13	1
6	The school has a clear plan ..	65	47%	73	53%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.23	0.61
7	Teachers obtain good ..	44	32%	94	68%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.04	1.06
8	The school is accountable to	54	39%	80	58%	4	3%	0	0%	0	0%	4.12	0.96
9	Excellence is rewarded	47	34%	61	44%	30	22%	0	0%	0	0%	4.04	1.14
10	The school offers co-curricular ..	44	32%	74	54%	20	14%	0	0%	0	0%	3.86	1.1
11	Teachers use professional ...	65	47%	73	53%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.12	0.47

#	SCHOOL FACTORS	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
12	The school conforms ...	78	57%	60	43%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.29	0.946
13	School buildings ...	59	43%	69	50%	10	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.19	0.989
14	There is a good relationship ..	71	51%	67	49%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.37	0.94
15	The school evaluates ...	61	44%	50	36%	27	20%	0	0%	0	0%	4.15	0.95
16	Counseling services ..	65	47%	63	46%	10	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.18	0.92
	Average	59	43%	77	56%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	4.11	1

Appendix C1

Descriptive statistics of teachers' responses to teaching and learning factors (No. 136)

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	The school promotes Islamic ..Arab	79	58%	49	36%	3	2%	1	1%	4	3%	4.48	0.916
2	There is an appropriate ..	84	62%	41	30%	6	4%	0	0%	5	4%	4.52	0.819
3	There is a challenging and attractive ...	70	51%	55	40%	6	4%	1	1%	4	3%	4.42	0.865
4	Teachers emphasize core .	66	49%	58	43%	7	5%	1	1%	4	3%	4.35	0.872
5	Teachers expect students to learn	61	45%	63	46%	7	5%	0	0%	5	4%	4.32	0.882
6	Learning is monitored	65	48%	54	40%	12	9%	0	0%	5	4%	4.33	0.933
7	Teachers support a range of classroom learning	68	50%	54	40%	9	7%	1	1%	4	3%	4.09	0.87
8	Teachers support ex-curricular	66	49%	53	39%	12	9%	0	0%	5	4%	4.37	0.934
9	Teachers provide positive feedback	67	49%	55	40%	10	7%	0	0%	4	3%	4.44	0.83

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
10	Class time and resources ...	66	49%	59	43%	6	4%	0	0%	5	4%	4.39	0.883
11	Teachers emphasize pupils' personal, spiritual...	69	51%	50	37%	12	9%	0	0%	5	4%	4.43	0.926
12	Teachers are committed and well qualified	79	58%	49	36%	3	2%	1	1%	4	3%	4.51	0.857
	Average	70	51%	53.3	39%	8	6%	0	0%	5	3%	4.41	0.88

Appendix C2

Descriptive statistics of principals' responses to teaching and learning factors (No. 46)

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	The school promotes Islamic...Arab .	28	61%	17	37%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	4.75	0.5
2	There is an appropriate environment ...	33	72%	12	26%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	4.81	0.401
3	There is a challenging and	27	59%	18	39%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	4.72	0.454
4	Teachers emphasize core knowledge ..	24	52%	20	43%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	4.58	0.5
5	Teachers expect students to learn	18	39%	26	57%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	4.58	0.554
6	Learning is monitored	23	50%	21	46%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	4.65	0.544
7	Teachers support a range of classroom learning	25	54%	18	39%	3	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.41	0.549
8	Teachers support ex-curricular activity	23	50%	19	41%	4	9%	0	0%	0	0%	4.53	0.654
9	Teachers provide positive	25	54%	20	43%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	4.58	0.554

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
	feedback												
10	Class time and resources are used well	22	48%	22	48%	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%	4.47	0.696
11	Teachers emphasize pupils' personal	28	61%	17	37%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	4.56	0.607
12	Teachers are committed ..	25	54%	21	46%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4.6	0.649
	Average	25	54%	19	41%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	4.62	0.56

Appendix C3

Descriptive statistics of students' responses to teaching and learning factors (No. 142)

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
1	The school promotes Islamic..	73	51%	48	34%	17	12%	3	2%	1	1%	4.28	1.12
2	There is an appropriate ..	78	55%	45	32%	12	8%	0	0%	7	5%	4.27	1.078
3	There is a challenging and ...	74	52%	42	30%	17	12%	5	4%	4	3%	4.18	1.067
4	Teachers emphasize core ...	66	46%	48	34%	22	15%	4	3%	2	1%	4.12	1.072
5	Teachers expect students to learn	87	61%	32	23%	15	11%	1	1%	7	5%	4.46	0.826
6	Learning is monitored	61	43%	53	37%	22	15%	3	2%	3	2%	4.08	0.967
7	Teachers support a range ...	74	52%	41	29%	22	15%	4	3%	1	1%	4.13	0.938
8	Teachers support ex-curricular ..	70	49%	48	34%	16	11%	3	2%	5	4%	4.14	0.95
9	Teachers provide ...	69	49%	46	32%	22	15%	4	3%	1	1%	4.15	0.961
10	Class time and resources ..	76	54%	43	30%	20	14%	1	1%	2	1%	4.36	0.962

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
11	Teachers emphasize pupils' ..	80	56%	36	25%	22	15%	4	3%	0	0%	4.42	0.907
12	Teachers are committed and well qualified	77	54%	40	28%	14	10%	7	5%	4	3%	4.4	1.095
	Average	74	52%	44	31%	18	13%	3	2%	3	2%	4.26	1

Appendix C4

Descriptive statistics of parents' responses to teaching and learning factors (No. 138)

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
1	The school promotes Islamic..	80	58%	41	30%	11	8%	4	3%	2	1%	4.37	0.962
2	There is an appropriate ..	69	50%	51	37%	11	8%	7	5%	0	0%	4.33	0.859
3	There is a challenging and ..	63	46%	52	38%	15	11%	8	6%	0	0%	4.19	0.935
4	Teachers emphasize core ..	59	43%	63	46%	12	9%	4	3%	0	0%	4.22	0.768
5	Teachers expect students..	53	38%	65	47%	15	11%	3	2%	2	1%	4.1	0.877
6	Learning is monitored	58	42%	53	38%	22	16%	3	2%	2	1%	4.16	0.89
7	Teachers support a range..	63	46%	51	37%	18	13%	6	4%	0	0%	4.19	0.874
8	Teachers support ex-curricular ..	57	41%	55	40%	22	16%	2	1%	2	1%	4.12	0.927
9	Teachers provide ..	64	46%	59	43%	10	7%	5	4%	0	0%	4.31	0.793
10	Class time and resources..	63	46%	59	43%	12	9%	4	3%	0	0%	4.28	0.797
11	Teachers emphasize pupils' personal, ..	61	44%	62	45%	10	7%	5	4%	0	0%	4.28	0.811

#	Teaching And Learning Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
12	Teachers are committed ..	65	47%	58	42%	9	7%	6	4%	0	0%	4.36	0.889
	Average	63	46%	56	40%	14	10%	5	3%	1	0%	4.23	0.87

Appendix D1

Descriptive statistics of teachers' responses to student factors (No. 136)

#	Student Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	Teachers emphasize the positive ..	93	68%	31	23%	7	5%	1	1%	4	3%	4.57	0.852
2	Teachers encourage students to ..	81	60%	43	32%	7	5%	1	1%	4	3%	4.5	0.821
3	Teachers encourage a high	80	59%	39	29%	11	8%	1	1%	5	4%	4.35	0.917
4	Students are highly motivated	68	50%	50	37%	12	9%	0	0%	6	4%	4.34	0.926
5	Teachers emphasize the ..	67	49%	55	40%	9	7%	0	0%	5	4%	4.38	0.925
6	There is the provision of ..	76	56%	48	35%	5	4%	2	1%	5	4%	4.45	0.925
7	There is the provision of ..	71	52%	50	37%	8	6%	3	2%	4	3%	4.43	0.876
	Average	77	57%	45	33%	8	6%	1	1%	5	4%	4.45	0.89

Appendix D2

Descriptive statistics of principals' responses to student factors (No. 46)

#	Student Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	Teachers emphasize the positive...	27	59%	16	35%	3	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.71	0.572
2	Teachers encourage students to ..	27	59%	16	35%	2	4%	1	2%	0	0%	4.65	0.553

#	Student Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
3	Teachers encourage a high level of ..	26	57%	16	35%	4	9%	0	0%	0	0%	4.57	0.471
4	Students are highly motivated	22	48%	22	48%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	4.57	0.698
5	Teachers emphasize the ..	17	37%	26	57%	3	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.54	0.657
6	There is the provision of ...	24	52%	20	43%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	4.6	0.544
7	There is the provision of ..	25	54%	18	39%	3	7%	0	0%	0	0%	4.6	0.604
	Average	24	52%	20	43%	2	4%	0	0%	0	0%	4.62	0.59

Appendix D3

Descriptive statistics of students' responses to student factors (No. 142)

#	Student Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	Teachers emphasize the ..	75	53%	41	29%	17	12%	5	4%	4	3%	4.3	1.131
2	Teachers encourage students ...	86	61%	31	22%	14	10%	7	5%	4	3%	4.38	1.064
3	Teachers encourage a high self-esteem	81	57%	36	25%	16	11%	7	5%	2	1%	4.32	0.982
4	Students are highly motivated	65	46%	46	32%	21	15%	5	4%	5	4%	4.09	1.065
5	Teachers emphasize the ..	67	47%	48	34%	19	13%	5	4%	3	2%	4.26	0.99
6	There is the provision of ..	75	53%	41	29%	17	12%	5	4%	4	3%	4.26	1.058
7	There is the provision of ..	74	52%	38	27%	15	11%	8	6%	7	5%	4.13	1.211
	Average	75	53%	40	28%	17	12%	6	4%	4	3%	4.25	1.07

Appendix D4

Descriptive statistics of parents' responses to student factors (No. 138)

#	Student Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	Teachers emphasize the positive ..	87	63%	32	23%	14	10%	4	3%	1	1%	4.45	0.864
2	Teachers encourage ..maximum potential	83	60%	38	28%	9	7%	6	4%	2	1%	4.4	0.936
3	Teachers encourage..self-esteem	76	55%	45	33%	11	8%	5	4%	1	1%	4.29	0.859
4	Students are highly motivated	62	45%	47	34%	21	15%	6	4%	2	1%	4.16	0.966
5	Teachers emphasize the ..	60	43%	52	38%	24	17%	2	1%	0	0%	4.23	0.845
6	There is the provision of ..	65	47%	57	41%	9	7%	6	4%	1	1%	4.32	0.854
7	There is the provision .. counseling .	65	47%	53	38%	15	11%	5	4%	0	0%	4.35	0.802
	Average	71	51%	46	33%	15	11%	5	4%	1	1%	4.33	0.88

Appendix E1

Descriptive statistics of teachers' responses to school-home relationship factors (No. 136)

#	School-Home Relationship Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	Parents .. informed .. child's progress	69	51%	38	28%	25	18%	0	0%	4	3%	4.91	0.288
2	Parents are involved.. child's learning	68	50%	40	29%	22	16%	0	0%	6	4%	4.87	0.344
3	There...effective parent-school association	61	45%	41	30%	28	21%	1	1%	5	4%	4.7	0.449
4	Parents are encouraged.. the	54	40%	52	38%	25	18%	0	0%	5	4%	4.85	0.869

#	School-Home Relationship Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
	classroom												
5	There is an active .. parents' committee	67	49%	38	28%	25	18%	0	0%	6	4%	4.44	0.843
6	Parents' days are well attended	63	46%	44	32%	24	18%	0	0%	5	4%	4.65	0.573
7	Parents are proud of the school	57	42%	47	35%	27	20%	1	1%	4	3%	4.13	0.388
	Average	63	46%	42	31%	26	19%	0	0%	5	4%	4.66	0.54

Appendix E2

Descriptive statistics of principals' responses to school-home relationship factors (No. 46)

#	School-Home Relationship Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	Parents are regularly informed .. child's progress	29	63%	11	24%	6	13%	0	0%	0	0%	4.82	0.447
2	Parents .. child's learning	29	63%	13	28%	4	9%	0	0%	0	0%	5	0
3	There is .. parent-school association	26	57%	16	35%	4	9%	0	0%	0	0%	4.72	0.548
4	Parents .. help in the classroom	22	48%	18	39%	6	13%	0	0%	0	0%	4.8	0.548
5	There is.. parents' committee	28	61%	14	30%	4	9%	0	0%	0	0%	4.6	0.447
6	Parents' days are well attended	20	43%	21	46%	5	11%	0	0%	0	0%	4.8	0.447
7	Parents are proud of the school	22	48%	18	39%	6	13%	0	0%	0	0%	4.65	0.447
	Average	25	54%	16	35%	5	11%	0	0%	0	0%	4.77	0.41

Appendix E3

Descriptive statistics of students' responses to school-home relationship factors (No. 142)

#	School-Home Relationship Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	Parents are regularly informed ..	72	51%	40	28%	23	16%	5	4%	2	1%	3.52	1.173
2	Parents are involved ..learning	61	43%	50	35%	27	19%	4	3%	0	0%	4	1.136
3	There is ..parent-school association	58	41%	41	29%	39	27%	4	3%	0	0%	3.68	1.099
4	Parents are encouraged .. the classroom	54	38%	51	36%	26	18%	9	6%	2	1%	3.86	1.146
5	There is an active .. parents' committee	53	37%	51	36%	25	18%	#	7%	3	2%	3.41	1.234
6	Parents' days are well attended	49	35%	49	35%	33	23%	8	6%	3	2%	3.54	1.089
7	Parents are proud of the school	41	29%	57	40%	29	20%	#	8%	4	3%	3.4	1.143
	Average	55	39%	48	34%	29	20%	7	5%	2	1%	3.63	1.15

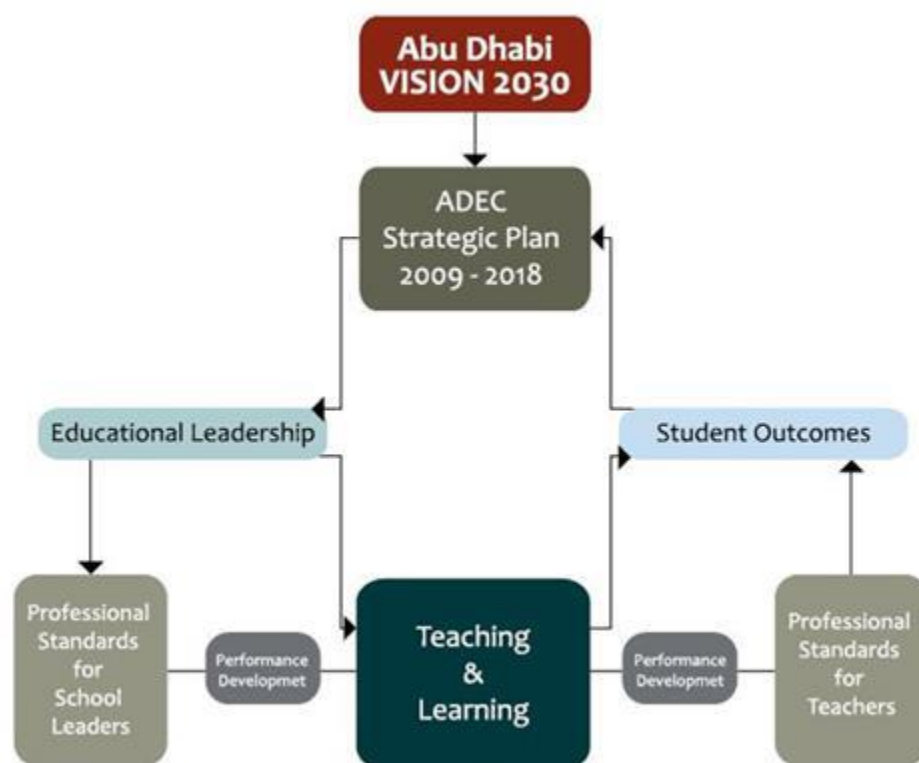
Appendix E4

Descriptive statistics of parents' responses to school-home relationship factors (No. 138)

#	School-Home Relationship Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
1	Parents are regularly informed progress	85	62%	35	25%	14	10%	2	1%	2	1%	3.53	1.221
2	Parents are involved .. child's learning	82	59%	41	30%	13	9%	2	1%	0	0%	3.65	1.161

#	School-Home Relationship Factors	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Little Important		Not Important		M	SD
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
3	There is .. parent-school association	77	56%	40	29%	14	10%	7	5%	0	0%	3.64	1.168
4	Parents are .. help in the classroom	42	30%	75	54%	15	11%	5	4%	1	1%	3.8	1.103
5	There is... parents' committee	75	54%	34	25%	21	15%	8	6%	0	0%	3.46	1.194
6	Parents' days are well attended	81	59%	32	23%	15	11%	9	7%	1	1%	3.61	1.184
7	Parents are proud of the school	76	55%	35	25%	21	15%	6	4%	0	0%	3.51	1.189
	Average	74	54%	42	30%	16	12%	5	4%	1	1%	3.6	1.17

Appendix C : Framework of the ADEC Strategic Plan 2009-2018



Appendix 1: The Main Study Questionnaire (English)

Dear Principal and Vice Principal,

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that I am conducting research on “*Leading Effective Secondary Schools in Abu Dhabi*”. The main purposes of this research are to consider the characteristics of an effective school and the qualities of effective school leadership in the UAE , and to identify ways to improve the effectiveness of schools and develop school leadership .

Please respond to the items in this survey to help me collect the data I need to fulfil the research purposes. Your responses and those of other people will be considered, appreciated and treated confidentially, and the results of the study will only be used for research purposes.

Thank you for participating

Nafla Mahdi Al Ahabbi (PhD student)

Email: n.al-ahbabi.1@research.gla.ac.uk

General Instructions

Before responding to the items in this questionnaire, please consider the following points:

- The questionnaire is divided into six parts:
 1. General Information
 2. Effective School Definitions
 3. Characteristics of Effective Schools. This is divided into five factor types: School, Teaching and Learning, Students, School-home relationship, and Local Community.
 4. Qualities_of effective school leadership
 5. School improvement strategies, and
 6. Ways for improving school leadership.
- In part one you are kindly required to provide your demographic information as accurately as possible.
- From part two to six, we are seeking your views regarding the level of importance for each item.
- Please read carefully the specific instructions for each part of the questionnaire before responding.

PART A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Please tick (✓) the appropriate box for each item below:

1. Your Gender :

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

3. Nationality :

- ☐ UAE
- ☐ Non UAE Arab
- ☐ Non-Arab

6. School leadership experience (in years)

7. Length of experience as a teacher (in years)

8. Highest level of education

- ☐ Diploma (Two years after secondary school)
- ☐ Higher Diploma
- ☐ Bachelor's degree (In education)
- ☐ Bachelor's degree (other than education)
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ PhD

9. Is your current school :

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Rural

2. Gender of pupils:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

4. How old are you?

- ☐ Less than 30
- ☐ 30-35
- ☐ 36-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51-55
- ☐ 56 – 60
- ☐ More than 60

5. Your School's Zone:

- ☐ Abu Dhabi
- ☐ Al-Ain
- ☐ Gharbiah

PART B: OPINIONS WITH REGARD TO EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

PART B1: Effective Schools Definitions

Researchers and practitioners use the term "School Effectiveness-Effective Schools" to describe a certain situation in a school. To what extent do you agree with the various definitions of an effective school? Indicate your level of agreement by circling the appropriate response on the left hand side, where 1 = Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, and 5 = Strongly agree.

Level of agreement					Definitions of an effective school
1	2	3	4	5	
					An effective school focuses mostly on academic success
					An effective school supports the development of good citizens
					An effective school ensures that graduates have the skills needed to find employment
					An effective school supports the development of an understanding of Islamic principles

PART B2 : Effective School Factors

Instructions:

For each item in part B2 through part F below, please respond in the way that corresponds to your opinion.

- For each item, on the left hand side, tick (✓) in terms of the level of importance, where 1 = extremely important 2 = very importance 3 = moderately important 4 = little importance and 5 = not important.

- The following example of how to complete the questionnaire is provided:

If you feel that "A clear and common vision on the part of the leader and the staff" is very important, then you should fill in the questionnaire in the following way.

5	4	3	2	1	School Factors
	✓				A clear and common vision on the part of the leader and the staff

Type One : School Factors

No	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	SCHOOL FACTORS
	5	4	3	2	1	
1						There is a clear vision for the school

No	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	SCHOOL FACTORS
	5	4	3	2	1	
2						Teachers know what they are supposed to do
3						Staff are committed
4						The curriculum is appropriate
5						There is an effective discipline policy
6						The school has a clear plan for development
7						Teachers obtain good support from senior staff
8						The school is accountable to parents and families
9						Excellence is rewarded
10						The school offers co-curricular activities
11						Teachers use professional development to improve their teaching
12						The school conforms to UAE heritage and culture
13						School buildings and resources are used well
14						There is a good relationship between staff and students
15						The school evaluates its progress
16						Counseling services are provided

Type Two: Teaching and learning factors

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	TEACHING AND LEARNING FACTORS
	5	4	3	2	1	
.1						The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity
.2						There is an appropriate environment for learning
.3						There is a challenging and attractive atmosphere for learning.
.4						Teachers emphasise core knowledge and skills
.5						Teachers expect students to learn
.6						Learning is monitored
.7						Teachers support a range of classroom learning
.8						Teachers support extracurricular activity
.9						Teachers provide positive feedback
.10						Class time and resources are used well
.11						Teachers emphasise pupils' personal, spiritual, moral,

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	TEACHING AND LEARNING FACTORS
	5	4	3	2	1	
						socialdevelopment
.12						Teachers are committed and well qualified

Type Three: Student Factors

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	STUDENT FACTORS
	5	4	3	2	1	
.1						Teachers emphasise the positive behaviour of the students
.2						Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential
.3						Teachers encourage a high level of student self-esteem
.4						Students are highly motivated in terms of learning
.5						Teachers emphasise the development of higher order thinking skills
.6						There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all
.7						There is the provision of effective counseling services

Type Four : School-home relationship factors

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	SCHOOL-HOME RELATIONSHIP FACTORS
	5	4	3	2	1	
.1						Parents are regularly informed about their child's progress
.2						Parents are involved in their child's learning
.3						There is an effective parent-school association

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	SCHOOL-HOME RELATIONSHIP FACTORS
	5	4	3	2	1	
.4						Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom
.5						There is an active and supportive parents' committee
.6						Parents' days are well attended
.7						Parents are proud of the school

Type five : Local Community Factors

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	LOCAL COMMUNITY FACTORS
	5	4	3	2	1	
.1						There is a variety of societies and clubs in the school
.2						Staff play an active role in the community
.3						Pupils play an active role in the community
.4						Members of the community play an active role in the school.
.5						There are good links with local industry
.6						Supporting social services is a major activity for the school

PART C: OPINIONS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
	5	4	3	2	1	
.1						The school has a strong, purposeful and involved leader

.2						The school leader is very experienced
.3						The school leader shows he/she has high expectations
.4						The school leader is positive and consistent in his/her approach
.5						The school leader shows a high level of ethics and morals
.6						The school leader is knowledgeable
.7						The school leader has good problem-solving skills
.8						The school leader is creative and innovative
.9						The school leader is physically active
.10						The school leader thinks positively
.11						The school leader is an effective communicator and motivator
.12						The school leader maintains close rapport with teachers
.13						The school leader emphasises high academic achievement
.14						The school leader creates a positive climate
.15						The school leader fulfills most of the objectives of the school
.16						The school leader maintains close supervision over the school
.17						The school leader manages the school competently

PART D: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS
	5	4	3	2	1	
.1						School leaders should undertake a leadership education programme and be provided with leadership experience prior to becoming a school principal
.2						The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff
.3						The school should integrate Islamic and local cultural

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS
	5	4	3	2	1	
						values as well as using modern, Western educational methods
.4						The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria
.5						The Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) should cooperate with schools to ensure the recruitment of committed, high quality staff
.6						The school leadership should take responsibility for developing strategies for improvement, based on a realistic assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses
.7						The school leadership should establish strategies for effective communication with all members of the school community
.8						The school leadership should take responsibility for change management and establish processes and practices to ensure this is effective
.9						National curriculum requirements should guide the school curriculum and activities within the classroom
.10						The school should establish strategies that will enable consistent and focused professional staff development
.11						The school should have high expectations for the success of every student, and establish teaching strategies that take into account diverse abilities within the student body
.12						Teaching and learning should be strongly aligned with the assessment process, with assessment being used for a wide range of student achievement measures
.13						The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional learning community
.14						Where possible, the school should encourage teachers, parents and students to be involved in decision making about aspects of school development
.15						The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teachers

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS
	5	4	3	2	1	
.16						School leaders should see themselves as learners as well as leaders
.17						It is important to have an independent government body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools
.18						The school should establish, develop and promote partnerships with parents, community agencies and others that might support the development of the school

PART E: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

(For Principals & Teachers only)

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	WAYS FOR DEVELOPING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
	5	4	3	2	1	
.1						Undertaking a Master's degree in educational leadership
.2						Attending a training course on school leadership that is more than 6 months long
.3						Attending regular professional development activities on leadership issues
.4						Attending information sessions held by the Ministry of Education
.5						Attending regular discussions with other school leaders on leadership issues
.6						Being coached by an experienced principal
.7						Being mentored by an experienced principal
.8						Working with teachers on issues of school improvement
.9						Using online resources from other countries

No.	extremely important	very importance	moderately important	little important	not important.	WAYS FOR DEVELOPING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
	5	4	3	2	1	
.10						Developing and aligning research-based practices
.11						Implementing high educational performance standards (continuation of International Partnership)
.12						Developing skills with regard to managing curriculum and knowledge
.13						School principal being subject to an evaluation of performance which would determine the possibility of continuation of his/her work . remaining in the post..
.14						Attending sessions in relation to ADEC's policy and regulations

If you are interested in taking part in the second part of this research, which involves a personal interview, please let me have your name, or call the above-mentioned phone number:

Name:

Phone number:

Thank you for your time. I am most appreciative of your help.

Appendix 2: The Main Study Questionnaire (Arabic)

الأفاضل مديرو ونواب المدارس

السادة اولياء الامور وطلاب المرحلة الثانوية

إنه لمن دواعي سروري أن أبلغكم أنني أقوم بإجراء بحث حول " نحو مدارس ثانوية فاعلة في امارة أبوظبي – دولة الامارات العربية المتحدة ". الغرض الأساسي من هذا البحث هو النظر في مدى توافر خصائص المدرسة ، والعمل فيما بعد على تحديد الفعالة وصفات القيادة المدرسية الفعالة في سياق دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة السبل الكفيلة بتحسين فعالية المدارس وسبل تطوير القيادة المدرسية. يرجى التكرم بالاجابة على بنود الاستبيان في هذه الدراسة لمساعدتي في جمع البيانات وتحقيق أغراض البحث. علما أن ما ستقدمونه من معلومات واقتراحات ستعامل بسرية تامة وفي إطار أخلاقيات البحث العلمي، ولن تستخدم إلا لأغراض التطوير والتحسين المرجوة(وكما تلاحظون لا أسماء ولا أي بيانات شخصية مطلوبة في الاستبيان) لذلك أرجو ان تكون الاجابات صريحة وصادقة

أشكر لكم مساهمتكم ومشاركتكم في إنجاز البحث

نقله مهدي ناصر مبارك الأحبابي (طالبة دكتوراه ، جامعة جلاسكو ببريطانيا)

يمكنكم التواصل معي عن طريق :

Email: n.al-ahbabi.1@research.gla.ac.uk

تليفون : 00971504492028

التعليمات العامة

قبل الرد على بنود هذا الاستبيان، يرجى النظر في النقاط التالية:

• ينقسم الاستبيان إلى خمسة أجزاء:

1. معلومات عامة،

2. خصائص المدارس الفعالة. وتنقسم هذه إلى خمسة عوامل هي: العوامل المدرسية، ، عوامل التعليم والتعلم،

عوامل تتعلق بالطالب ، علاقة المدرسة و المنزل، والمجتمع المحلي .

3. صفات القيادة المدرسية الفعالة،

4. القضايا المرتبطة بتحسين المدارس ،

5. استراتيجيات تحسين القيادة المدرسية .

أرجو التكرم بقراءة التعليمات الخاصة بكل جزء من الاستبيان بعناية تامة قبل الرد عليها .

البيانات الشخصية:

++ يرجى وضع علامة (√) امام الاختيار الصحيح :

1- الوظيفة :

- ☐ مدير / نائب مدير مدرسة
- ☐ مدرس
- ☐ ولي أمر
- ☐ طالب / طالبة

4. الجنس

- ☐ ذكر
- ☐ أنثى

3. نوع الطلاب

- ☐ ذكور
- ☐ إناث

5. الجنسية

- ☐ مواطن
- ☐ عربي
- ☐ غير عربي

6. نوع المدرسة

- ☐ مدرسة حكومية
- ☐ مدرسة خاصة

4. كم عمرك ؟

- ☐ أقل من 30
- ☐ 30-35
- ☐ 36-40
- ☐ 41-50
- ☐ 51-55
- ☐ 56 – 60
- ☐ أكثر من 60

7- خبرتك كقائد مدرسي (بالسنوات)

12- تعتبر مدرستك من مدارس..

- ☐ المدينة
- ☐ منطقة نائية

11- كم مدة خدمتك كمدرس ؟ (بالسنوات)

13- تقع مدرستك في :

- ☐ أبوظبي
- ☐ العين
- ☐ الغربية

14- المؤهل العلمي (اعلى شهادة علمية حصلت عليها)

- ☐ دبلوم (سنتان بعد الثانوية العامة)
- ☐ درجة البكالوريوس (في التعليم)
- ☐ درجة البكالوريوس (عدا التعليم)
- ☐ ماجستير
- ☐ دكتوراه

++ يرجى وضع علامة (✓) امام الاختيار الصحيح :

1.أراؤكم حول تعريف المدارس الفعالة

1.1 اعتاد الباحثون استخدام مصطلح " مدرسة فعالة" لوصف حالة معينة تتصف بها بعض المدارس. إلى أي مدى تتفق مع التعاريف المختلفة للمدرسة الفعالة ؟ يمكنك تحديد مستوى اتفاقك بوضع دائرة حول الرد المناسب على الجانب الأيسر، حيث

1 = لا أوافق بشدة، 2 = لا أوافق ، 3 = غير متأكد ، 4 = أوافق، و 5 = أوافق بشدة.

درجة الاتفاق					يتم تعريف المدرسة الفعالة بـ	
5	4	3	2	1		
أوافق بشدة	أوافق	غير متأكد	لا أوافق	لا أوافق بشدة		
					المدرسة الفعالة هي التي تحقق النجاح الأكاديمي للطالب	1
					المدرسة الفعالة تدعم تطوير مواطنين صالحين	2
					المدرسة الفعالة تضمن لخريجها وجود المهارات اللازمة لإيجاد وظيفة	3
					المدرسة الفعالة تدعم المبادئ الإسلامية وتجعلها واقعاً ملموساً	4

2.عوامل المدرسة الفاعلة

تعليمات ملء البنود أدناه حسب المثال الموضح ادناه :

على الجانب الأيسر من العبارات ، يرجى وضع علامة (✓) لتحديد مستوى أهمية هذا العنصر في المدرسة الفعالة ، حيث

1 = ليس مهما 2 = قليل الأهمية 3 = متوسط الأهمية 4 = مهم جداً و 5 = غاية في الأهمية.

المثال التالي يوضح كيفية إكمال الاسئلة :

إذا كنت ترى أن وجود "رؤية واضحة ومشتركة من جانب القائد والموظفين" مهماً جداً ولكن يتم تطبيقها أحياناً في مدرستك، فعليك ملء الاستبيان كما يلي :

درجة الأهمية					1. العوامل المدرسية	
5	4	3	2	1		
غاية في الأهمية	مهم جداً	متوسط الأهمية	قليل الأهمية	ليس مهماً		
	✓				هناك رؤية واضحة ومشتركة من قبل القائد والموظفين	

درجة الأهمية					1.العوامل المدرسية	#
5	4	3	2	1		
					هناك رؤية واضحة ومشتركة من قبل القائد والموظفين	1.
					المدرسة لديها هيكل واضح للمهام الوظيفية لكل موظف ويعمل به فعلياً	2.
					موظفي المدرسة لديهم التزام كبير نحو اداء مهامهم الوظيفية	3.

4.	المنهاج المدرسي الذي تقدمه المدرسة ذو جودة عالية					
5.	المدرسة تطبيق لائحة الانضباط المدرسي بشكل عادل وفعال					
6.	لدى المدرسة خطة تطوير لموظفيها فعالة وواضحة					
7.	المدرسة تدعم المدرسين في عملهم اليومي					
8.	المدرسة لديها نظام فعال وواضح للمساءلة*					
9.	المدرسة لديها نظام مكافآت للتميز					
10.	تطبق المدرسة مجموعة متنوعة من الأنشطة اللاصفية بشكل فعال					
11.	يخضع موظفي المدرسة لبرامج التطوير المهني					
12.	المدرسة تستجيب لعادات وتقاليد المجتمع الاماراتي					
13.	المدرسة توظف كافة مصادرها سواء الابنية المدرسية أو التكنولوجيا الحديثة لتحسين مخرجات التعلم					
14.	هناك علاقات وثيقة بين الموظفين والطلاب					
15.	المدرسة لديها وسائل تقييم ومتابعة ذاتية فعالة					
16.	تقدم المدرسة خدمات اجتماعية ومشورة فعالة لافراد المجتمع المدرسي					
#	2.العوامل التدريسية والتعليم	درجة الاهمية				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	تعزز المدرسة الهوية الإسلامية والعربية في الدروس والمناهج الدراسية					
2.	هذه المدرسة لديها بيئة مناسبة للتعلم					
3.	توفر المدرسة جواً من التحدي وبيئة جاذبة للتعلم (تعاونية وتنافسية)					
4.	يعزز المعلمون المام الطالب بالمعارف والمهارات الأساسية لمواجهة المواقف الحياتية					
5.	توقعات نتائج التعلم و مخرجاته في هذه المدرسة عالية					
6.	هناك رصد منهجي للتقدم الدراسي في هذه المدرسة					
7.	المعلمون حريصون على إيجاد وخلق بيئة تعلم ثرية في الفصول الدراسية					
8.	المعلمون يشجعون النشاط اللاصفي (الرحلات ، الأنشطة المرافقة للمادة ، الدراسة خارج الفصل الدراسي ...)					
9.	المعلمون يقدمون ردود فعل إيجابية وتعزيز فوري لعمل الطالب					
10.	المعلمون يوظفون الاستخدام الأمثل لوقت الحصة والموارد التعليمية المتوفرة					
11.	المعلمون يعززون ويطورون الصفات الشخصية والروحية والأخلاقية والاجتماعية .. للطلاب					
12.	المعلمون ملتزمون بأداء عملهم ومؤهون بشكل جيد					
#	3.العوامل المتعلقة بالطلاب	درجة الاهمية				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	المعلمون يعززون السلوك الإيجابي للطلاب مثل (الصدق ، الالتزام ، التفوق ..)					
2.	المعلمون يشجعون الطلاب للوصول للحد الأقصى لقدراتهم					
3.	المعلمون يعززون لدى الطالب تقدير الذات (احترام شخصية الطالب وأراءه ويسعون لتنمية آرائه)					
4.	الطلاب في هذه المدرسة لديهم دوافع قوية للتعلم					
5.	المعلمون يؤكدون على تنمية مهارات التفكير العليا (التفكير الناقد ، طرق حل المشكلات ، اتخاذ القرار...)					
6.	هذه المدرسة توفر فرص تعليمية متساوية للجميع					
7.	هذه المدرسة توفر خدمات المشورة الفعالة سواء من الاختصاصي الاجتماعي او من الطاقم التدريسي والاداري					
#	4.عوامل العلاقة بين المنزل والمدرسة	درجة الاهمية				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	الآباء يبلغون بانتظام عن مدى التقدم الدراسي لأبنهم					
2.	الآباء يشاركون في تعليم أبنائهم					
3.	هناك ارتباط وثيق وفعال بين الآباء والمدرسة					
4.	المدرسة تشجع الآباء للمساعدة في الفصول الدراسية					
5.	هناك لجنة من أولياء الأمور داعمة للعمل المدرسي					
6.	الآباء يتمتعون بحضور دائم لمجالس الآباء					

7.	الاباء فخورون بالمدرسة					
#	5.عوامل البيئة المحلية المحيطة بالمدرسة					
	درجة الاهمية					
	5	4	3	2	1	
1.	هناك مجموعة متنوعة من الجمعيات والاندية المدرسية تخدم المجتمع خارج المدرسة					
2.	موظفو المدرسة يقومون بدور نشط في المجتمع خارج المدرسة					
3.	التلاميذ يقومون بدور فعال في مجتمع خارج المدرسة					
4.	المجتمع المحلي يقوم بدور فعال في المدرسة.					
5.	تحرص المدرسة على بناءعلاقة جيدة مع الصناعة المحلية					
6.	النشاط الرئيس للمدرسة هو دعم الخدمات الاجتماعية للمجتمع خارج المدرسة					

* المسألة : تعمل على محاسبة المقصرين وتشجيع ومكافأة المبدعين والناجحين

3.صفات القيادة المدرسية الفعالة

#	صفات القائد المدرسي الفعال					
	درجة الاهمية					
	5	4	3	2	1	
1.						المدرسة لديها قيادة قوية وهادفة وتشاركية
2.						لديه خبرة كبيرة في العمل المدرسي
3.						لديه توقعات عالية بالنسبة لنواتج التعلم المدرسي
4.						إيجابي وذو نهج ثابت في أدائه
5.						على مستوى عال من الأخلاق والآداب العامة
6.						يمكن وصفه أنه ذو علم ومعرفة
7.						لديه مهارات جيدة في حل المشكلات
8.						يمكن وصفه بالإبداع والابتكار
9.						يمكن وصفه بأنه يبذل نشاطاً بندياً كبيراً
10.						يفكر بشكل إيجابي ومثمر
11.						يمكن وصفه بأنه اجتماعي ويدفع للعمل
12.						يحافظ على علاقة وثيقة مع المعلمين
13.						يعزز ويكافئ التحصيل الدراسي العالي
14.						يخلق مناخا إيجابيا في المدرسة
15.						يحقق ويفي بمعظم أهداف المدرسة
16.						يشرف بدقة على سير منظومة العمل المدرسي
17.						يمكن وصفه بأنه يدير المدرسة بكفاءة وجدارة

4.قضايا ترتبط بتحسين البيئة المدرسية

#	استراتيجيات لتحسين المدرسة ...	درجة الاهمية				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	على قادة المدارس اجتياز برنامج تأهيلي في القيادة المدرسية قبل أن يصبح مدير المدرسة					
2	أن يكون للمدرسة رؤية واضحة وطموحة يتم إعدادها من قبل قائد المدرسة والموظفين					
3	المدرسة يجب أن تستوحي القيم الإسلامية و الثقافة المحلية جنباً الى جنب استخدام الأساليب التربوية الحديثة الغربية					

درجة الاهمية					#	استراتيجيات لتحسين المدرسة ...
5	4	3	2	1		
					4	على المدرسة تحديد المعايير التي سيتم الحكم من خلالها على مدى نجاحها وإعداد أساليب لقياس هذه المعايير
					5	على مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم (ADEC) التعاون مع المدارس لضمان توظيف موظفين ذوي التزام وكفاءة عالية
					6	قيادة المدرسة يجب أن تتحمل المسؤولية عن وضع استراتيجيات لتحسين نقاط القوة والضعف في المدرسة بناءً على تقييم واقعي للعمل المدرسي
					7	على قيادة المدرسة وضع استراتيجيات للتواصل الفعال مع جميع أعضاء المجتمع المدرسي (مدرسين ، طلاب ، آباء .. الخ)
					8	قيادة المدرسة يجب أن تتحمل المسؤولية عن إدارة وتفعيل عملية التغيير المرجوة ووضع الاساليب والخطط الكفيلة بتحقيق ذلك
					9	التوجهات الوطنية العليا يجب أن تقود المناهج الدراسية والأنشطة المدرسية داخل الفصول
					10	على المدرسة أن توظف استراتيجيات متنوعة تحقق من خلالها تنمية متسقة ومكثفة وداعمة للتطوير المهني للموظفين
					11	أن يكون لدى المدرسة توقعات عالية لنجاح كل طالب عن طريق وضع استراتيجيات التدريس التي تراعي وتعزز وتحفز قدرات الطلاب المختلفة
					12	يجب ان يحظى الطلاب بمجموعة واسعة من أساليب التقييم المختلفة لقياس التحصيل العلمي
					13	على القيادة المدرسية تشجيع العمل بروح الفريق وإقامة مجتمع التعلم*
					14	قدر الامكان ، المدرسة ينبغي أن تشجع المعلمون وأولياء الأمور والطلاب أن يكونوا جزءاً مهماً من عملية صنع القرار حول جوانب العمل المدرسي
					15	أن تكون المدرسة ذات بيئة تعليمية آمنة وداعمة لكل من الطلاب والمعلمين
					16	يجب على زعماء المدرسة أن يروا أنفسهم كمعلمين وقادة في الوقت نفسه
					17	من المهم أن يكون هناك هيئة وجهة حكومية مستقلة (غير تابعة للوزارة أو مجالس التعليم) للإشراف ومراقبة جودة التعليم في المدارس
					18	أن تعمل المدرسة على تطوير وتحفيز شراكات مع الآباء ومؤسسات المجتمع المحلي وغيرها من الجهات التي يمكن أن تدعم تطوير المدرسة

*مجتمعات التعلم بأنها" المجتمعات التي تستعمل كل مواردها المادية والفكرية ، النظامية وغير النظامية ، في المدرسة وخارج المدرسة ، وذلك وفقاً لجدول عمل يمكن كل فرد من النمو والاشتراك مع الآخرين .

5. استراتيجيات لتطوير القيادة المدرسية

درجة الاهمية					No	من وسائل تطوير القيادة المدرسية ...
5	4	3	2	1		
					1	الحصول على درجة الماجستير في القيادة التربوية
					2	حضور دورة تدريبية في القيادة المدرسية تستغرق أكثر من 6 أشهر
					3	حضور دورات التطوير المهني للقيادة المدرسية المطروحة من

					قبل مجلس التعليم	
					أهمية المشاركة في فعاليات ادارة العمل المدرسي التي تقيمها وزارة التربية والتعليم خلال العام الدراسي	4
					حضور لقاءات منتظمة مع قادة المدارس الأخرى بشأن مناقشة مشاكل القيادة المدرسية وكيفية تجاوزها	5
					أن يتم تدريب مدير المدرسة من قبل مدير سابق ذي خبرة طويلة	6
					أن يتم توجيه مدير المدرسة من قبل مدير سابق ذي خبرة طويلة	7
					العمل مع المعلمين على معالجة قضايا المجتمع المدرسي	8
					استخدام مصادر المعلومات المتاحة على الانترنت من بلدان أخرى	9
					تطوير الممارسات المدرسية (القيادية او التدريسية) اعتمادا على نتائج البحوث التربوية	10
					تطبيق معايير عالية لقياس الأداء (أهمية وجود الشراكات التعليمية العالمية الحالية)	11
					تطوير مهارات مدير المدرسة فيما يتعلق بإدارة المناهج والمعرفة	12
					اخضاع مدير المدرسة لتقييم الأداء الذي بناء عليه تتحدد إمكانية استمراره في العمل من عدمه	13
					حضور دورات فيما يتعلق بالسياسات واللوائح الصادرة من مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم	14

إذا كنت ترغب في المشاركة في الجزء الثاني من هذا البحث الذي ينطوي على المقابلة الشخصية ، أرجو أن ترفق معلومات الاتصال الخاصة بك، أو الاتصال برقم الهاتف المذكور في بداية الاستبيان .

الاسم: رقم الهاتف:

أشكر لك الوقت الثمين والمساعدة القيمة التي منحتنا اياها ،،،

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق التقدير والاحترام ،،،

Appendix 3a: The Main Study Interview (English)

Indicative Interview Questions for School Principals

The following questions will be used as a guide for interviews with the Principals of Public Secondary Schools in Abu Dhabi. Follow up questions may be used from time to time to clarify the responses, but these will be the questions used to focus the data collection.

Part One: School Effectiveness (SE) Definitions

1.1 Interviewer: Please consider the following list of ES definitions which were ordered according to their importance from higher to lower priority:

[The following list of SE definitions to be displayed]

1. An effective school supports the development of an understanding of Islamic principles
2. An effective school supports the development of good citizens
3. An effective school focuses mostly on academic success
4. An effective school ensures that graduates have the skills needed to find employment

[The interviewee to be given sufficient time to consider]

1.2 Do you agree that the definitions of SE mentioned in this list are important? Why / why not?

1.3 Do you think that all these definitions are of similar importance? Why / why not?

Part Two: School Effectiveness Characteristics

2.1 Interviewer: Please consider the following two lists of most and least important school factors as effective school (ES) characteristics:

[The following list of school factors to be displayed]

School factors	
Most important	Least important
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The school has a clear plan for development2. The school conforms to UAE heritage and culture3. There is a good relationship between staff and students	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Excellence is rewarded2. The school offers co-curricular activities3. The school evaluates its progress

[The interviewee to be given sufficient time to consider]

2.2 Do you agree or disagree with the importance level of each list? Why/ why not?

2.3 Interviewer: Please consider the following two lists of most and least important teaching and learning factors as ES characteristics:

[The following list of teaching and learning factors to be displayed]

Teaching and learning factors	
Most important	Least important
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The school promotes Islamic and Arab identity 2. There is an appropriate environment for learning 3. Teachers are committed and well qualified 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learning is monitored 2. Teachers support a range of classroom learning 3. Teachers support extracurricular activity

[The interviewee to be given sufficient time to consider]

2.4 Do you agree or disagree with the importance level of each list? Why / why not?

2.5 Interviewer: Please consider the following two lists of most and least important student factors as ES characteristics:

[The following list of student factors was displayed]

Student Factors	
Most important	Least important
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers emphasize the positive behavior of the students 2. Teachers encourage students to reach their maximum potential 3. There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students are highly motivated in terms of learning 2. Teachers emphasize the development of higher order thinking skills 3. There is the provision of equal learning opportunities for all.

[The interviewee to be given sufficient time to consider]

2.6 Do you agree or disagree with the importance level of each list? Why / why not?

2.7 Interviewer: Please consider the following two lists of most and least important school-home relationship factors as ES Characteristics:

[The following list of school-home relationship factors to be displayed]

School-Home Relationship Factors	
Most important	Least important
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents are regularly informed about their child's progress 2. Parents are involved in their child's learning 3. Parents are encouraged to help in the classroom 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is an active and supportive parents' committee 2. Parents' days are well attended 3. Parents are proud of the school

[The interviewee to be given sufficient time to consider]

2.8 Do you agree or disagree with the importance level of each list? Why/ why not?

2.9 Interviewer: Please consider the following two lists of most and least important local community factors as ES characteristics:

[The following list of local community factors to be displayed]

Local Community Factors	
Most important	Least important
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff play an active role in the community,2. Pupils play an active role in the community,3. Members of the community play an active role in the school.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There is a variety of societies and clubs in the school2. Supporting social services is a major activity for the school3. There are good links with local industry

[The interviewee to be given sufficient time to consider]

2.10 Do you agree or disagree with the importance level of each list? Why / why not?

Part Three: Effective School Leadership Qualities

3.1 Interviewer: Please consider the following two lists of most and least important ES leadership qualities:

[The following list of ES leadership qualities to be displayed]

Effective School Leadership Qualities	
Most important	Least important
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The school leader is very experienced2. The school leader shows a high level of ethics and morals3. The school leader manages the school competently	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The school leader shows he/she has high expectations2. The school leader is creative and innovative3. The school leader is physically active

[The interviewee to be given sufficient time to consider]

3.2 Do you agree or disagree with the importance level of each list? Why/ why not?

Part Four: Strategies for Improving SE

4.1 Interviewer: Please consider the following two lists of most and least important strategies for improving SE:

[The following list of strategies for improving SE to be displayed]

Strategies For Improving SE	
Most important	Least important
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The school should have a clear and ambitious vision established by the leader and staff 2. The school leadership should encourage teamwork and establish a professional learning community 3. The learning environment should be safe and supportive of both students and teacher 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School leaders should undertake leadership education programme and be provided with leadership experiences prior to becoming a school principal 2. The school should identify criteria by which success will be judged, and establish processes for measuring these criteria 3. It is important to have an independent government body to inspect and regulate the quality of education in schools

[The interviewee was given sufficient time to consider]

4.2 Do you agree or disagree with the importance level of each list? Why / why not?

Part Five: Ways for Developing School leadership effectiveness

5.1 Interviewer: Please consider the following two lists of most and least important Ways for developing school leadership effectiveness:

[The following list of developing school leadership effectiveness to be displayed]

Ways For Developing School Leadership Effectiveness	
Most important	Least important
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attending regular discussions with other school leaders on leadership issues. 2. Working with teachers on issues of school improvement. 3. Attending sessions in relation to ADEC's policy and regulations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertaking a Master's degree in educational leadership 2. Being coached by an experienced principal 3. Being mentored by an experienced principal

[The interviewee to be given sufficient time to consider]

5.2 Do you agree or disagree with the importance level of each list? Why / why not?

Thanking the interviewee

Appendix 3b: The Main Study Interview (Arabic)

الاسئلة الاتية ستستخدم كأداة توجه دفة المقابلات مع مدراء المدارس الثانوية في ابوظبي .

الجزء الاول : تعريف فعالية المدرسة

سوف يتم عرض تعاريف للمدرسة الفاعلة ويطلب من المدير ترتيبها حسب الاهمية والاولوية:

1. المدرسة الفعالة هي التي تحقق النجاح الأكاديمي للطلاب
 2. المدرسة الفعالة تدعم تطوير مواطنين صالحين
 3. المدرسة الفعالة تضمن لخريجها وجود المهارات اللازمة لإيجاد وظيفة
 4. المدرسة الفعالة تدعم المبادئ الإسلامية وتجعلها واقعاً ملموساً
- الى اي مدى توافق على اهمية هذا التعاريف في توضيح دور المدرسة الفاعلة ؟ لماذا؟ والسبب ؟
- هل تعتقد ان هذه التعاريف بالقدر نفسه من الاهمية؟ لماذا ؟ ولماذا لا؟

الجزء الثاني: خصائص المدرسة الفاعلة :

سوف يتم عرض الخصائص الخمس للمدرسة الفاعلة مقسمة الى : الاكثر اهمية والاقل اهمية ، كل عنصر على حده، وهي :

1. العوامل المدرسية
 2. عوامل التدريس والتعليم
 3. عوامل الخاصة بالطلبة
 4. عوامل العلاقة بين البيت والمدرسة
 5. عوامل البيئة المحيطة بالمدرسة
- وسيتم مناقشة كل عامل على حده بحسب العوامل الخمسة المذكورة سابقا، وهذا مثال على أحد العوامل المدرسية وكيفية الاسئلة التي تتبعه :

العوامل المدرسية	
الاقل اهمية	الاكثر اهمية
1. المدرسة لديها نظام مكافآت للتميز	1. لدى المدرسة خطة تطوير لموظفيها فعالة وواضحة
2. تطبق المدرسة مجموعة متنوعة من الأنشطة اللاصفية بشكل فعال	2. المدرسة تستجيب لعادات وتقاليد المجتمع الاماراتي
3. المدرسة لديها وسائل تقييم ومتابعة ذاتية فعالة	3. هناك علاقات وثيقة بين الموظفين والطلاب

هل توافق / لاتوافق ، مع ما تم استنتاجه من العوامل الاكثر اهمية والاقل اهمية ؟ لماذا ؟ ولماذا لا ؟

و الامر نفسه في :

الجزء الثالث: صفات القيادة الفاعلة :

يتم عرض صفات القائد الفاعل بحسب الاكثر والاقل اهمية بحسب ما تم استخراجه احصائيا اعتمادا على وجهات نظر عينات الدراسة كالاتي:

صفات القائد الفاعل	
الاقل اهمية	الاكثر اهمية
1. لديه توقعات عالية بالنسبة لنواتج التعلم المدرسي	1. لديه خبرة كبيرة في العمل المدرسي
2. يمكن وصفه بالإبداع والابتكار	2. المدير على مستوى عال من الأخلاق والأداب العامة
3. يمكن وصفه بأنه يبذل نشاطاً كبيراً	3. المدير يمكن وصفه بأنه يدير المدرسة بكفاءة وجدارة

هل توافقي / لا توافقي ، مع ما تم استنتاجه من العوامل الأكثر أهمية والاقلة أهمية ؟ لماذا ؟ ولماذا لا ؟

الجزء الرابع: استراتيجيات ترتبط بتحسين البيئة المدرسية

يتم عرض استراتيجيات لتحسين المدرسة البيئة المدرسية بحسب الأكثر والاقلة أهمية بحسب ما تم استنتاجه احصائيا اعتمادا على وجهات نظر عينات الدراسة كالاتي:

استراتيجيات ترتبط بتحسين البيئة المدرسية	
الأقل أهمية	الأكثر أهمية
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. على قادة المدارس اجتياز برنامج تأهيلي في القيادة المدرسية قبل أن يصبح مدير المدرسة 2. على المدرسة تحديد المعايير التي سيتم الحكم من خلالها على مدى نجاحها وإعداد أساليب لقياس هذه المعايير 3. من المهم أن يكون هناك هيئة وجهة حكومية مستقلة (غير تابعة للوزارة أو مجالس التعليم) للإشراف ومراقبة جودة التعليم في المدارس 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. أن يكون للمدرسة رؤية واضحة وطموحة يتم إعدادها من قبل قائد المدرسة والموظفين 2. على القيادة المدرسية تشجيع العمل بروح الفريق وإقامة مجتمع التعلم* 3. أن تكون المدرسة ذات بيئة تعليمية آمنة وداعمة لكل من الطلاب والمعلمين

هل توافقي / لا توافقي ، مع ما تم استنتاجه من العوامل الأكثر أهمية والاقلة أهمية ؟ لماذا ؟ ولماذا لا ؟

الجزء الخامس: استراتيجيات لتطوير القيادة المدرسية

يتم عرض استراتيجيات لتحسين المدرسة البيئة المدرسية بحسب الأكثر والاقلة أهمية بحسب ما تم استنتاجه احصائيا اعتمادا على وجهات نظر عينات الدراسة كالاتي

استراتيجيات لتطوير القيادة المدرسية	
الأقل أهمية	الأكثر أهمية
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. الحصول على درجة الماجستير في القيادة التربوية 2. أن يتم توجيه مدير المدرسة من قبل مدير سابق ذي خبرة طويلة 3. أن يتم تدريب مدير المدرسة من قبل مدير سابق ذي خبرة طويلة 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. العمل مع المعلمين على معالجة قضايا المجتمع المدرسي 2. حضور لقاءات منتظمة مع قادة المدارس الأخرى بشأن مناقشة مشاكل القيادة المدرسية وكيفية تجاوزها 3. حضور دورات فيما يتعلق بالسياسات واللوائح الصادرة من مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم

هل توافقي / لا توافقي ، مع ما تم استنتاجه من العوامل الأكثر أهمية والاقلة أهمية ؟ لماذا ؟ ولماذا لا ؟

اشكركم على حسن المشاركة والاستجابة،،،

Appendix 4: ADEC approval (Research Permit)



مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
التعليم أولاً Education First

Date: 30th October 2013	التاريخ: 30 أكتوبر 2013
Ref:	الرقم:
To: Public Schools Principals,	السادة / مديري المدارس الحكومية
Subject: Letter of Permission	الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة باحثين
Dear Principals,	تحية طيبة وبعد،،،
The Abu Dhabi Education Council would like to express its gratitude for your generous efforts & sincere cooperation in serving our dear students.	يطيبٌ لمجلس أبوظبي للتعليم أن يتوجه لكم بخالص الشكر والتقدير لجهودكم الكريمة والتعاون الصادق لخدمة أبنائنا الطلبة.
You are kindly requested to allow the researcher/ Nafila Mahdi Nasser Al Ahbabi , to complete her research on: Towards leading Effective Secondary Schools in Abu Dhabi, UAE : Stakeholders' Perceptions	ونود إعلامكم بموافقة مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم على موضوع الدراسة التي ستجريها الباحثة / نفلة مهدي ناصر الأحبابي ، بعنوان: Towards leading Effective Secondary Schools in Abu Dhabi, UAE : Stakeholders' Perceptions
Please indicate your approval of this permission by facilitating her meetings with the sample groups at your respected schools.	لذا، يرجى التكرم بتسهيل مهمة الباحثة ومساعدتها على إجراء الدراسة المشار إليها.
For further information: please contact Mr Helmy Seada on 02/6150140	للاستفسار: يرجى الاتصال بالسيد / حلمي سعدة على الهاتف 02/6150140
Thank you for your cooperation.	شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم
Sincerely yours,	وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير،،،
 محمد سالم محمد الظاهري المدير التنفيذي لقطاع العمليات المدرسية	

Appendix 5 : Survey participation Consent Form

Consent Form For Survey With School Leader

Title of Project: Towards leading Effective Secondary Schools in Abu Dhabi, UAE : Stakeholders' Perceptions

Name of Researcher: Nafla Al Ahbabi

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the Plain Language Statement for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, or to withdraw any data previously supplied, without giving any reason.
3. I understand that all information about me will be treated in strict confidence and that I will not be named in any written work arising from this study.
4. I agree / do not agree (delete as applicable) to take part in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher: Nafla Al Ahbabi	Date	Signature

Appendix 6 : Interview participation Consent Form

Consent Form for Interview with School Leader

Title of Project: Towards leading Effective Secondary Schools in Abu Dhabi, UAE:
Stakeholders' Perceptions

Name of Researcher: Nafla Al Ahbabi

5. I confirm that I have read and understand the Plain Language Statement for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
6. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, or to withdraw any data previously supplied, without giving any reason.
7. I understand that all information about me will be treated in strict confidence and that I will not be named in any written work arising from this study.
8. I understand that any audiotaped material taken during the course of my interview will be used solely for research purposes and will be destroyed on completion of the research.
9. I agree / do not agree (delete as applicable) to take part in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher: Nafla Al Ahbabi	Date	Signature

Appendix 7 : Plain language statement -Survey (Parents)

I am Nafla Al Ahbabi and I am studying for a PhD in Education at the University of Glasgow. The title of the study is Toward Leading Effective Secondary Schools in Abu Dhabi, UAE: Stakeholders' Perceptions.

This research is supervised by Professor Tony Townsend; Chair in Public Service, Educational Leadership & Management, (Professional Learning and Leadership); email: Tony.Townsend@glasgow.ac.uk, and telephone: 01413304434; and Dr Alan Britton, email: Alan.Britton@glasgow.ac.uk, and telephone: 01413303498.

You are being invited to take part in this study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with me if you wish. Please feel free to ask questions about anything you are unclear about or if you would like to have more information. Please take the time to consider whether or not you wish to take part.

The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of the stakeholders of UAE schools, namely: School leader (principals, vice principals), teachers, students and parents, about their views on what the characteristics of effective secondary schools are and also their perceptions of the work of school leaders. More specifically, the study will try to find out what characteristics of effective schools are seen to be important in the UAE, whether or not UAE secondary schools are currently perceived to be effective and what types of leadership are currently being displayed by school leaders. The study will also identify strategies by which school leadership can be developed, improved and promoted to improve the effectiveness of schools in the future. The study will consider the UAE context and compare it with the international research.

Your school / your child's school has been selected as one of 30 public / private secondary schools in the Abu Dhabi Educational Region. I am seeking to collect data on your opinions, knowledge, beliefs and experiences as a parent of a pupil in one of the chosen schools. I seek your views about the characteristics of an effective school, good school leadership and ways in which schools might be improved in the future. Your responses will join those of respondents in other schools to establish an overall picture that will help improve school effectiveness for Abu Dhabi Secondary Education.

You can decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and do not need to provide a reason. Not being involved in the study will have no consequences for you as a parent of a student in a secondary school.

However, if you do agree to take part in the study, I will ask you to complete a questionnaire that looks at how important various school and leadership characteristics are and whether or not these are displayed at the school in question. You will also be asked to think about various strategies that might be used to improve the quality of school leadership. This questionnaire will take approximately one hour to complete.

All information which is collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will be identified by position only (for instance, school A, parent 1 or school 3, parent 5). A pseudonym will be assigned for your school.

The data collected in this study will be used as part of a PhD study. If you wish, you can receive a summary of the results of this study and the research findings. A copy of the thesis will be available online from the University of Glasgow.

This study has been approved by the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

For further information, please contact me at email : n.al-ahbabi.1@research.gla.ac.uk or telephone: 00971504492028. You could also contact Professor Tony Townsend at email: Tony.Townsend@glasgow.ac.uk or telephone: 01413304434; or Dr Alan Britton at email: Alan.Britton@glasgow.ac.uk , telephone: 01413303498.

In addition, if you have any concerns regarding the conduct of the research project you can contact Dr Valentina Bold, Ethics Officer, at the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at: Valentina.Bold@glasgow.ac.uk.

Appendix 8 : Plain language statement –Interview for School Leaders (Principals + Vice Principals)

I am Nafla Al Ahbabi and I am studying for a PhD in Education at the University of Glasgow. The title of the study is Toward Leading Effective Secondary Schools in Abu Dhabi, UAE: Stakeholders' Perceptions.

This research is supervised by Professor Tony Townsend; Chair in Public Service, Educational Leadership & Management, (Professional Learning and Leadership); email: Tony.Townsend@glasgow.ac.uk, and telephone: 01413304434; and Dr Alan Britton, email: Alan.Britton@glasgow.ac.uk, and telephone: 01413303498.

You are being invited to take part in this study. Before you decide whether you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with me if you wish. Please feel free to ask questions about anything you are unclear about or if you would like to have more information. Please take the time to consider whether or not you wish to take part.

The purpose of the study is to explore the perceptions of the stakeholders of UAE schools, namely: School leaders (principals and vice principals) teachers, students and parents, about their views on what the characteristics of effective secondary schools are and also their perceptions of the work of school leaders. More specifically, the study will try to find out what characteristics of effective schools are seen to be important in the UAE, whether or not UAE secondary schools are currently perceived to be effective, what types of leadership are currently being displayed by school leaders, and to identify strategies by which school leadership can be developed, improved and promoted to improve the effectiveness of schools in the future. The study will consider the UAE context and compare it with the international research.

Your school has been selected as one of 30 public / private secondary schools in the Abu Dhabi Educational Region. I am seeking to collect data on your opinions, knowledge, beliefs and experiences as a senior administrator in one of the chosen secondary schools. I seek your views about the characteristics of an effective school and good school leadership and ways in which schools might be improved in the future. Your responses will join those of respondents in other schools to establish an overall picture that will help improve school effectiveness for Abu Dhabi Secondary Education. In addition, I will be asking you as a school leader about your experiences of leadership development. Some school principals will also be invited to take part in an interview to gain further understanding of the issues that arise.

You can decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and do not need to provide a reason. Not being involved in the study will have no consequences for you as an administrator or leader of a secondary school.

However, if you do agree to take part in the study, I will ask you to complete a questionnaire that looks at how important various school and leadership characteristics are and whether or not these are displayed at the school. You will also be asked to think about

various strategies that might be used to improve the quality of school leadership. This questionnaire will take approximately one hour to complete.

In addition you may be invited to take part in an interview of approximately half an hour to establish your thoughts and beliefs on issues established by the questionnaire in respect to the characteristics of effective leadership and possible training or support that may assist the development of more effective schools and school leadership. The format of the interview will be semi-structured and the session will be recorded by an audio recorder. The specific questions of the interview will be identified by the results of the first part of the study and will be the subject of a second ethics approval process.

All information which is collected during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will be identified by position only (for instance, principal school A) and a pseudonym will be assigned for your school.

The data collected in this study will be used as part of a PhD study. If you wish, you can receive a summary of the results of this study and the research findings. A copy of the thesis will be available online from the University of Glasgow.

This study has been approved by the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

For further information, please contact me at email: n.al-ahbabi.1@research.gla.ac.uk or telephone: 00971504492028. You could also contact Professor Tony Townsend at email: Tony.Townsend@glasgow.ac.uk or telephone: 01413304434; or Dr Alan Britton at email: Alan.Britton@glasgow.ac.uk , telephone: 01413303498

In addition, if you have any concerns regarding the conduct of the research project you can contact Dr Muir Houston , Ethics Officer, at the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at: Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk.